

The CLEARING HOUSE

A JOURNAL FOR MODERN JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

Vol. 35

JANUARY 1961

No. 5

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Educational TV—What's the Story? . . . The Motivated Learner . . . Reading Skills for Slow Learners in Junior and Senior High School . . . Strategy in the Guidance Program . . . High-School Achievement in English

PUBLISHED BY FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY PRESS

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THE CLEARING HOUSE is published at Curtis Reed Plaza, Menasha, Wisconsin. Editorial office: THE CLEARING HOUSE, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Teaneck, New Jersey. Published monthly from September through May.

Subscription price: \$4.50 a year. Two years for \$7.60 if cash accompanies order. Single copies 60 cents. Sub-
scription for less than a year will be charged at the single-copy rate. For subscriptions in groups of ten or more, write
for special rates. Foreign countries and Canada, \$5.10 a year, payment in American funds. Printed in U.S.A.
Second-class postage paid at Menasha, Wisconsin.

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CH volumes are available on microfilm.

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We invite readers to write articles that report good practices, interesting experiments, research findings, or new slants on persistent problems in education. We prefer articles that combine factual reporting, interesting context, and incisive style. Topics should relate to programs, services, and personnel in junior and senior high school.

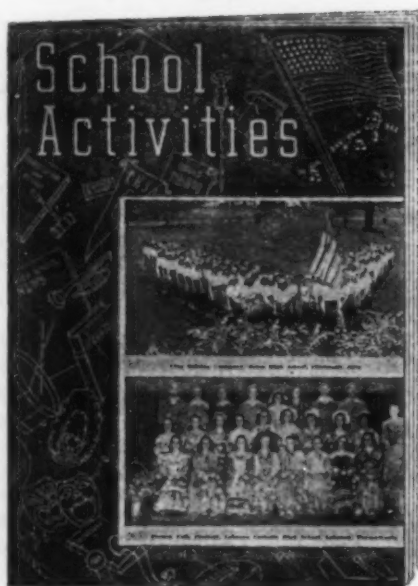
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EDUCATIONAL TV— *What's the Story?*

By EDWARD R. FAGAN

EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION as a topic for faculty discussion usually generates more heat and less light than any other topic on the myriad agendas of the nation's school administrators. Regardless of the educational level involved, faculties are vocal and emotional about "TV or not TV" as a method of education. (1) Inevitably students are drawn into the controversy, perhaps because of the high degree of faculty emotions on the use of television as a teaching device. Students at all educational levels reflect the hopes, fears, and biases of their instructors, with the result that they tend (where election is possible) to enroll in or forego a course depending on whether it is offered via the television medium.

Research studies (2) on the effectiveness of television as a teaching medium frequently present contradictory evidence. These paradoxical findings tend to raise questions among educators about the validity of the research procedures. Yet careful examination of research procedures shows that the usual precautions of control and tests for significance have been observed in most, not all, of the fifty published studies on television as a teaching medium. (3) Frequently the variable causing disparate results in student achievement via television instruction is alleged to be the teacher. (4) Evidence for the "teacher variable" comes

from the fact that with allegedly homogeneous and/or matched experimental groups taking television instruction, one group increased scores on standardized tests, while a second group taking the same course with the same content fell below the norms on the same standardized test. The use of test scores—standardized or otherwise—as the sole criteria of the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of television is seriously questioned by most of those who have done extensive research on evaluating television as a teaching medium. (5)

Generally, such researchers ask: Is the purpose of education the desire merely to increase scores on tests? What other evidence of learning should be considered in evaluating television as a teaching medium? In what curricular patterns can television function more efficiently and effectively than present school facilities and staff do? On the validated answers to these questions and others like them will the future of educational television be determined.

Facts and Figures

Research studies on the uses of educational television as a teaching medium up to the present (1960) recommend adoption of it by American educators largely on the basis: (1) that it is at least as effective as conventional teaching in providing stu-

dent learning experiences; (2) that it is more economical than spacebound classrooms because it can command larger audiences with fewer teaching personnel; (3) that it can better present certain materials and provide more effective learnings than any human counterpart in specialized parts of some academic disciplines.

These allegations and others like them can be supported by evidence resulting from studies of educational television from the elementary level through postgraduate schools. The human factor, so important to the implementation of new ideas, tends to be overlooked in much of television's

"brave electronic world." As Charles Siepmann pointed out in the *New York Times Magazine* (June 2, 1957) "... The major obstacle to bringing education abreast of these electronic times is not monetary. It is rather habitual and outworn patterns of thought, false fears among teachers that television will displace them." Whether teacher's fears are "false" seems questionable when Compton College's avowed program to put the entire undergraduate curriculum on a video tape and films is reportedly in the first stages of operation (*Time*, Vol. LXXII, December 22, 1958, p. 68). On the other hand, supporting somewhat Siepmann's statement is the 1958 survey of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (*Bulletin*, May 16, 1958) dealing with the intentions of its membership about the uses or future uses of television in their colleges. Of the 361 member institutions then reporting, 252 (70 per cent) said that they are not using and do not plan to use television for instruction; 22 institutions (6 per cent) said there was a possibility that they might use television for instruction; 37 institutions (10 per cent) said that they were, in 1958, using television for instruction; 50 institutions (14 per cent) said that they will use television as a medium of instruction. If (as the Education Section of the *New York Times* for May 1, 1960, avers) future school buildings are tending to incorporate planning for TV circuits, then the A.A.C.T.E.'s survey poses interesting problems as to how prospective teachers, largely unfamiliar with television instruction, will be able to incorporate the built-in TV facilities of their schools in their teaching.

The problem of teachers untrained to make optimum use of television as a teaching device may become serious if the present rate of growth in the uses of educational television continues. Pope's summary of the report of the Fund for the Advancement of Education (*New York Times*, February 15, 1959) stated that 550

EDITOR'S NOTE

We met a man the other day who was positive that TV is shortly going to have a tremendous effect on methods of teaching, on student progress, on school organization, and on the daily timetable. There is no way schools can avoid the implications of TV, he went on. Then he paused and added, "Isn't that right?"

Well, maybe. But how can TV be used to change teachers' methods, improve learning by students, and so on? How many TV sets for each classroom, how much of the day will be given over to TV instruction? And what about the programs needed? Will they come from educational or commercial stations? Who will foot the bill for this change? More important, are we sure that TV teaching is better than non-TV instruction, and in what respects?

The man was silent. He was thinking. And no wonder!

The writer of this article deals factually with the strengths and weaknesses of what he calls the TV "story." He doesn't claim too much. He isn't hypercritical. So don't look for the slant in his writing. His address is Albany, New York, where he is associate professor of education, State University College of Education at Albany, and consultant, Research Foundation of the State University of New York.

school districts and 110 colleges were involved in educational television. "Continental Classroom," a physics course offered via TV, was used by 240 colleges for student credit in physics. Fourteen states had 223 schools and 40,000 students enrolled in some form of educational or closed-circuit television in 1958-1959. Implicit success of television as a teaching device evolved from the following facts: In 110 comparisons, TV students were superior to control students in 68 (52 per cent) of the cases. The difference was statistically significant in 38 (34 per cent) of the 110 cases, and 29 (26 per cent) of the 110 cases favored TV classes. A more recent foundation report, the Midwest Program on Airborne Television Instruction, states that 500,000 school children in 569 public school systems and 100,000 college students in 117 colleges and universities are presently involved in some phase or other of instructional television. Clear superiority of television is implied by Mitchell (6) when she states that "of the 50 published studies on instructional television there was only one case where superior instruction resulted from face to face instruction."

Words like "superior," "significant," "better," without referents tend to be confusing as evidence for evaluating television instruction. "Quality" is another word in the same category and comes up frequently with regard to television. Dade County, Florida, for example, reports that with 5,600 pupils in television schools, it saved the equivalent of twenty-seven teaching positions and twenty-nine classrooms without sacrificing quality. (7) Almost as an afterthought the report mentions that "no student received all of his instruction by television." New York City's experiment with television allegedly found positive and negative indexes of the success of the medium in instruction. (8) It is interesting to note the laconic comment that two schools and their teachers in the New York City experiment were "enthusiastic."

Increasingly "enthusiasm," "attitudes," "feelings," are being recognized as prime forces in successful television instruction. And they are forces not easily ascertained by tests used to judge the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of television. The American Council on Education's 1958 publication of New York University's evaluation of its closed-circuit television program brought out that "students must accept closed-circuit television as a medium of instruction; once accepted by the students, student achievement tends to be the same as the achievement of students in conventional classrooms." (9)

Nor are N.Y.U.'s findings unique in the literature on television instruction. San Francisco State College (10), the University of Houston (11), Pennsylvania State University (12), Evanston Township (13), Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (14), State University College of Education at Albany (15)—all point out how crucial the attitude area is to successful implementation of television instruction. Statistics are available from these institutions and many others, but all that these statistics show is that, taken together on a nationwide basis, they indicate generally no significant difference between student achievement whether they take courses in conventional classrooms or via television. Both the American Psychological Association (16) and the Mathematical Association of America (17) devoted issues of their publications to examining findings on instructional television as used by their respective nationwide memberships. Again, the conclusion of both associations was this: There were no statistically significant differences between students taking courses via TV and those taking courses in the usual way.

Typical of the painstaking research that concludes with the findings of "no significant difference" between TV instruction and conventional instruction may be Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's study, "Effectiveness of Laboratory Instruction in

Strength of Material by Closed-Circuit Television." Using quiz scores, term-paper grades, examination marks, and course grades as measures of learning, two groups, both taught by senior faculty members, took the strength of material course. The experimental group contained 234 students instructed by television; the control group 199 students instructed in the conventional way. Exacting controls and statistical comparisons still led to the "no significant difference" conclusion.

Supporters of instructional television count such a conclusion as evidence showing the worth of television. But attitudes engendered by the "forced" TV experience may alter student perceptions of entire academic disciplines. An examination of these attitudes as they were obtained from a college using the television medium implies their consideration in judging any form of television instruction.

Attitudes and Opinions

The attitudes and opinions cited below are those of students, faculty, and administration concerning the use of closed-circuit television as a medium of instruction at a small college (2,100 students, 190 faculty members) in the Northeast. Although faculty and students were given the chance to express their opinions on television, the statements below are a sample of all instructors who used television in teaching, some instructors who had never taught on television but who had strong opinions about it, and students who received instruction via the closed-circuit television system. In addition to written statements, each sampled subject at a camera session with a TV committee appointed to evaluate attitude on TV instruction was given the opportunity to broaden or to clarify his written statements. Based on the written statements and the follow-up interviews, sampled opinions of TV instructors are listed below. Remembering N.Y.U.'s validated findings on the importance of atti-

tude to effective results from television instruction, imagine what might happen if course instructors have the following opinions about television:

TV is contrary to every principle of education and learning that I know.

Under comparable circumstances, students have indicated almost unanimously a preference for direct rather than TV teaching.

TV is generally no more effective than a large auditorium with films, speakers, etc., although certain graphics may be better presented and viewed via TV.

The use of TV here at the college is unnecessary; it is negative; it is largely useless.

Rather than have no education at all, we might better go to TV instruction, but we should frankly recognize that "if it is inferior, it is inferior."

Positive statements and evidence also were made by sampled subjects; some of these are as follows:

We should give TV a "break"; maybe we don't need fifty minutes to do the job with this medium. We should freely experiment to find the most appropriate TV organization.

Student performance on language tests has been just about as good on TV as with live instruction.

Actually, the TV group of students did slightly better than the live group on the same examination. Nonetheless, the opinion of the department favors conventional teaching rather than TV.

Summarizing other facets of opinion and attitudes concerning instructional television, the sample subjects pointed out:

That the salaries and equipment used in TV instruction raised serious questions about its economic advantages.

That special credits and time should be allotted the TV instructor because of unusual circumstances involved in TV teaching.

That given the same time credits, equipment in other areas of A-V aids, and money, conventional instruction could be improved to a point equal to or beyond the successes of TV instruction.

That special instruction for prospective TV instructors should be given prior to their teaching via television.

That information on all facets of television instruction should be made available to those concerned so that the purposes, involvements, experimentation, and results of experiments are known to all faculty and students.

Many faculty members objected to the fanfare on the use of television by over-eager public relations people, who reported the success of television instruction before the first program went on the air. These premature judgments of television's success have turned many potential television instructors away from instructional television in some schools where it is used.

Other positive aspects of television as a medium of instruction were brought out in several ways: the uses of video tapes to cover some rare phenomena unable to be duplicated in a classroom, demonstrations of the effects and properties of radioactive materials which would endanger students in a classroom, close-ups of rare slide specimens in biology and cytology, the use of surgical techniques in complex operations—these TV developments are contributions to man's knowledge which probably cannot be duplicated by the most talented instructors.

Conclusions

Most foundation-supported research on television assumes that television will alleviate the teacher shortage by making the skills of a "good" teacher available to many classrooms. Yet since 1900 no research study has been able with certainty to identify criteria for "effective" instructors. (18) To the extent that "good" teaching equals student ability to score well on tests, most television teaching has been "good," according to the research.

Student and faculty attitudes make significant differences on whether television is an effective medium of instruction. Tests—new in concept and design—are measuring more than the memory or recognition factor so common to objective or standardized tests. Some of the objectives of education are being re-examined as a result of learning measurements used to evaluate television instruction. From these considerations of attitude as a research variable, from these new tests and changed definitions of edu-

cational objectives, the entire field of education will be benefited.

Uses of educational television are increasing. By 1960-61, 569 public school systems and 117 colleges and universities, involving 500,000 school children and 100,000 college students, will be utilizing TV in their operation. (19) Research studies on the uses of television instruction point out almost unanimously that the following conditions be met if successful television instruction is to be expected:

(1) All persons affected by television instruction should be informed of the goals, expectations, and procedures to be used with the television medium.

(2) Volunteer instructors—teachers favoring experimentation with the medium—must be used if the television experience is to get off to a successful start. Negative attitudes by the teacher are transmitted to the students, and an atmosphere of negativism permeates the whole program.

(3) Technical personnel must be used to help volunteer instructors learn the assets and liabilities of the medium. Time for preparing materials, rehearsals, programming, scripts, and similar matters should be part of this in-service training for personnel.

(4) Efficient equipment, well maintained, is necessary to successful television instruction. Poor sound, poor picture, or both can engender attitudes that the medium is an electronic freak that will never work.

(5) Evaluation above and beyond the paper-and-pencil objective tests is needed for constant reappraisal (feedback) of both the instructional content and the attitudes being engendered by the TV instruction.

Television, most educators maintain, is a tool to aid conventional instruction; it will never replace the teacher. Historically viewed, books, films, and radio received almost the same public criticisms as those currently being directed toward television. Education managed to adjust to each of these scientific innovations and to incor-

porate them as tools supplementary to the classroom teacher. There is little reason to believe that television in the hands of capable teachers will wreck the curriculum or replace the teacher.

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Utilizing Equipment

I think we can say that many educational devices being tried today will be as open to suspicion as books originally were.

Whole new groups of aids to education have become available in the last few decades. One of the great educational problems of our generation will be to find out how to use these additional items in the educational process. How can they be used to further the education of the individual and to increase the contact between the student and the teacher? How can they be used to bring the teacher in contact with the best educational programs?

We do not know how to use motion pictures, film strips, radio, television, records, tape recorders and many other devices that the modern world has of-

fered to education. We do not know how to use the greater provision for travel and for communication that is available today. World-wide radio communication is available now. There are probably few if any school classrooms in the world which capitalize on this fact. A classroom in India and the United States could probably be in direct contact with each other. Technically we can do it—educationally we would not know what to do if we were offered the opportunity. A generation ago if a student wanted to hear French, German or Spanish spoken he was usually dependent upon his teacher. Today he might get much practice listening to records, tape recorders or radio contact with students in another land.—From the *School Executive*.

Improving Classroom Tests by Means of ITEM ANALYSIS

By
MARTIN KATZ

YOU ARE A SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER who takes time and pains to construct tests for your classes. You are anxious to use questions that will get at the main objectives of your teaching, will be fair to all of your students, will not be too easy or too hard, and will rank students as reliably as possible for marking purposes. Knowing the objectives and emphases of your instruction, you need no help in judging whether your test questions deal with the important skills and understandings that you have emphasized in your teaching. But you recognize that your estimates of the difficulty and the discriminating power of the questions have been made intuitively. You are aware that statistical procedures can be used to establish a firmer basis for such judgments. You know that test publishers routinely compute indexes of this sort, and you welcome the descriptive and analytic data they provide for standardized tests. However, having blanched perhaps at the staggering amount of work involved in item analysis as described in measure-

ment textbooks, you assume that you lack the time, equipment, and opportunity to compile similar data from your own classroom tests.

It is true that test publishers, who seek precision in processing large quantities of data, utilize methods and machinery not available to the average teacher. But there are simple, short-cut techniques which you can use to gain comparable information about your own tests. This objective evidence can help you to improve your tests and—in the long run—to reduce time and labor spent in test making. One such basic technique is a quick and easy method of item analysis.

An advantage of standardized tests, compared with teacher-made tests, is that a large number of test questions (or items, as test makers call them) have been tried out in preliminary form on a representative group of students. No matter how carefully the test content is planned or how expertly the items are written, there is no guarantee that these items will actually "behave" the way they are expected to. Pretesting the items provides an index of the difficulty and the discriminating power of each item. Items which prove too hard or too easy or are insufficiently discriminating between students who score high and students who score low on the tests as a whole are discarded or revised. The final form of the test, then, consists of items which have been demonstrated to be appropriate in difficulty and in discriminating power. A copious file of items of various sorts, with known characteristics for certain populations, soon accumulates so that new tests and forms can be "made to order."

EDITOR'S NOTE

The author is editor of publications of EAS (Evaluation and Advisory Service) of the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey. The article describes a technique by which teachers can improve the quality and usefulness of their own objective-type tests. What we liked particularly was the how-to-do-it emphasis. But through all the practical steps, it is evident that there are concepts and principles basic to good test construction.

As a classroom teacher, although generally denied an opportunity to try out test items in preliminary form, you can nevertheless benefit in a similar way from an item analysis of each test after it has been given. Like the test publisher, you can stock-pile items for a future use. Items which have worked well for a given purpose in one class can be used again in comparable classes. Knowing the difficulty and discriminating powers of various items, you can tailor new tests to rather exacting specifications. The inclusion of a number of tried-and-true items on a test affords you a base line against which to judge new items, and also enables you to compare performance of a present class with the performances of previous classes.

The practice of re-using old items that have worked well need not tip off students to memorize a few answers by rote. Obviously, tests should not merely repeat the same items every year. You will produce some new items for each new test, and you will not rotate the old items in a predictable pattern. However, within a few years the reservoir of items will have been so augmented that the danger of advance "spotting" by students will become negligible and the number of new items for each test can be substantially reduced. Furthermore—and probably most important—by systematic empirical testing of your own test items, you will have given yourself valuable in-service training. Thus, the quality of your tests will have been improved in two ways: knowledgeable use of items with proved characteristics and increased skill in writing new items.

For the file, it is convenient to write each item on an 8-inch by 5-inch card, indicating the correct response. At the top of the card, a key word or two pertaining to the kind of knowledge or skill that the item taps can serve as a useful code for filing item cards by content.¹ Under the headings

¹ Headings from two-way grids or other specifications of test content used in planning the test can

"% Successful" and "% Discriminations" you can record—along with each date when the item was used—the indexes which this article will show you how to obtain.

Simplified item analysis can be neatly combined with a simple scoring method for objective classroom tests. To illustrate procedures in concrete terms, this combination will be described below; however, variations and adaptations are possible.

Two homemade answer sheets for multiple-choice objective tests up to sixty items long can be reproduced on one piece of 8½-inch by 11-inch paper. The sixty items will follow numerically in two columns of thirty entries each, repeated twice on the page, using the following forms.

For the first column:

—1. A B C D E

—2. A B C D E

For the next two columns:

31. A B C D E —1. A B C D E

32. A B C D E —2. A B C D E

For the last column:

31. A B C D E —

32. A B C D E —

Schools can readily mimeograph and stock a supply of these answer sheets. The following directions may be helpful in typing the crowded stencil:

Starting at the left edge of the page, use five typewriter spaces for the horizontal lines up to item numbers 1-30 (leave an extra space before item numbers 1-9). The item number should be followed by a period and two spaces, and two spaces should separate the letters for the options, A B C D E. Five spaces can then be left before the second column of item numbers, 31-60, and two spaces should again separate the letters. The horizontal lines between the letter E for these item options and the

serve for this file code. See *ETS Builds a Test* (Princeton: Educational Testing Service, 1959), pp. 4-6; *Making the Classroom Test*, EAS Series No. 4 (Princeton: Educational Testing Service, 1959), pp. 5-6, 9; E. J. Furst, *Constructing Evaluation Instruments* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1958), pp. 195-197.

Sc	Sc	Sc	Sc	Sc	Sc	Sc	Sc	Sc	Sc	Score	
Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	Name	
Da	Da	Da	Da	Da	Da	Da	Da	Da	Da	Date	Subject
+	+	+	+	+				+	+		1. A B C D E 31. A B C D E +
+	+	+	+	+	+				+	+	2. A B C D E 32. A B C D E +
+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	3. A B C D E 33. A B C D E
+	+			+					+	+	4. A B C D E 34. A B C D E +
+	+	+	+		+	+	+		+	+	5. A B C D E 35. A B C D E +

FIGURE 1

next column of item numbers 1-30 should be ten spaces (again leave one extra space before item numbers 1-9); since the paper will be cut vertically to bisect these horizontal lines, they will end up five spaces wide and extend to the edge of a single answer sheet. Then, as before, two spaces should precede each letter, and five spaces intervene between the *E* and the next column of item numbers. The option letters should be spaced as before, and the horizontal line from the *E* to the right edge of the page will take five spaces.

Leave double space after each group of five items.

The right-hand portion of Fig. 1 (see above) shows the beginning of a typed answer sheet.

Students should be directed as follows:

Put an X through the letter that goes with the answer you have chosen. Choose only one answer for each question.

Example: Chicago is the name of

(A) a city (B) a state
(C) a nation (D) a continent (E) an ocean

(A) a city is correct. Therefore you would put an X through the letter A on your answer sheet.

Although the letters A B C D E permit use of five-option items, the same answer sheets can be used for test items with four

or three options by directing students to ignore *E*, or *D* and *E*. It can even be used for true-false items by designating *A* for True, *B* for False.

Prepare a scoring key by marking the correct answers on one answer sheet (Items 1-60). Cut $\frac{1}{4}$ inch off the left and right margins of this sheet, and also carefully cut out the box at the top which has been marked "Score." Then punch out the correct (marked) answers.

To score the test, first quickly scan the pupil's answer sheet to make sure there are no multiple responses to any item. If a pupil has X'd more than one letter for any item, draw a horizontal red line through all the letters for that item. Lay the prepared scoring key over the answer sheet so that the box for "Score" on the answer sheet appears at the corresponding aperture cut out of the scoring key. Right and left margins of the answer sheet will be exposed, and the letter representing the correct answer to each item will show through the punched out hole in the scoring key. If an X has been marked over that letter, the item has been answered correctly: mark a red + at the very edge of the answer sheet in the ruled margin for that item. If no X has been made over that letter or if a red line has been drawn through it, the item has not been answered correctly: make no mark. Then count the number of + marks in the margins and record the total in the

score box at the top of the answer sheet.

After totals have been recorded on all answer sheets, arrange the papers in descending order of scores. For classes ranging in size from 20 to 60, take the top ten papers, to be designated as the "high" scores, and the bottom ten, to be designated as the "low" scores. (The remaining papers will not be used in the item analysis.) Stack the highs neatly so that every paper overlaps all but the left edge of the one below it, exposing only the + marks in the left margin. These + marks for each item from 1 to 30 now appear in a continuous row. (The horizontal lines and the extra space after every five items on the answer sheets help to check on accurate alignment.) Stack the lows in a similar adjacent pile. A paper clip at the top and another at the bottom of each stack will hold the papers firmly in place while the number of "rights" (+ marks) for each item is tallied and recorded.

Count the number of + marks for the high group on item 1 and the number of + marks for the low group on item 1. The sum of these multiplied by 5 is a good estimate of the per cent of the whole class getting the item right, and can be entered on the item card under the heading "% Successful." (This can be regarded, inversely, as an index of item difficulty.) Subtract the number of lows getting the item right from the number of highs getting the item right and multiply by 10 for an index of the item's discriminating power, to be entered on the item card under the heading "% Discriminations." If we use H to designate the number of highs getting an item right and L the number of lows getting an item right, the formula for "% Successful" would read $(H + L)5$, and the formula for "% Discriminations" would be $(H - L)10$.

In Fig. 1, the ten high papers are illustrated in position so that "rights" on the first few items can be counted. It can be seen at a glance that for item 1, $H = 7$;

for item 2, $H = 8$; for item 3, $H = 9$; for item 4, $H = 5$; for item 5, $H = 8$. Suppose that for item 1, $L = 5$. Then the success index would be 60 per cent and the discrimination index 20 per cent for item 1.

Proceed in the same way for each item through 30. For items 31-60, the procedure will be similar except that answer sheets will be spread to the left in order to expose the + marks in the right margin in continuous rows.²

What figures are desirable for the success index? The answer depends largely on the purpose for which you are testing. When you are testing for mastery of some fundamental skill, you will obviously expect a high proportion of the class to know the right answers. When you are testing to select the very top students who should be considered for a prize award, you will use items that—while still representing important teaching objectives—are very difficult for most of the class; writing such items may challenge your ingenuity in requiring students to apply to unfamiliar situations some of the more complex skills and understandings they have acquired in the course.

However, when the principal purpose of the test is to rank all the students accurately in the order of their performance—for example, as a basis for marks which reflect standing in class—items of middle difficulty are best. Ideally for reliable ranking, each item on a five-option multiple-choice test would be so difficult that 60 per cent get it right; on a four-option multiple-choice test, 62 per cent; three-option, 66 per cent; true-false, 75 per cent—assuming that the score is the number of items answered correctly. In practice, item difficulties would of course fluctuate around these figures. But items that very few students get right or very few

² A method of item analysis by pupils' "show of hands" in the classroom is described in *Short-Cut Statistics for Teacher Made Tests*, EAS Series No. 5 (Princeton: Educational Testing Service, 1960).

students get wrong (say, as a rule of thumb, below 25 per cent or above 85 per cent on the success index for five-option multiple-choice items) are not likely to contribute much to a test used for this purpose. (This principle contradicts a common fallacy: Many teachers strive to include a number of very easy items and a number of very hard items in a single test. Such painstaking labors are a waste of time and effort.)

The discrimination index suggested here has been demonstrated³ to represent directly the "per cent of maximum possible correct discriminations," or "net discrimination achieved." Items with zero or negative discrimination are obviously suspect. In general, you may want to look twice at items with a discrimination index below 20 per cent and will probably discuss these items in class to see whether there was an ambiguity in wording, a misconception by students, some important gap in instruction, or other distinct cause to which the low discrimination should be attributed. For such items, a look at the responses to the "distractors" (i.e., the incorrect answer options) may be revealing. For example, if one distractor has been consistently chosen by the high group, you will check it carefully: was the wording ambiguous? could it justifiably be construed as the right answer? An average item discrimination index

of 30 per cent would probably be the minimum acceptable for most class ranking purposes. Items with a discrimination index over 40 per cent would be considered highly discriminating and desirable. (Of course, such figures are arbitrary. The range of ability in the class, as well as the purpose of the test, must be taken into account. Selective grouping often reduces the likelihood of sharp discrimination—and the need for it.)

The effects of chance factors on item statistics should not be ignored. With small numbers of cases, item statistics will fluctuate widely from one sample to another. Thus, an item should not be automatically discarded because of a low discrimination index. The low index merely "red-flags" the item. If close scrutiny, class discussion, and further analysis fail to reveal any defect, the item is still worth saving and using again. Chance factors alone may have been responsible for its "bad report" on one test. Or it may be tapping an entirely different kind of ability, not related to the other items on the test, but decidedly worth measuring. In such a case, the item may be saved for use in another kind of test.

In short, item statistics are not substitutes for teachers' judgments; they provide objective data on which more enlightened and knowledgeable judgments may be based. These judgments can then serve to improve testing and teaching.

³ For mathematical derivation, see W. G. Findley, "A Rationale for Evaluation of Item Discrimination Statistics," *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 16: 175-180 (1956).



More Responsive Teaching

The major prediction about teaching in the schools of the future is that it will be far less directive and controlling, but will be much more responsive. This means that teaching will pay very careful attention to the data coming from the child or group, both verbal and nonverbal. Out of this pupil behavior will come highly skilled professional teacher response. This responsive teacher behavior

(reaction) will help the learner idiomatically to take *his* next step, both in building *his* intellect and in furthering *his* socialization. Under this kind of teaching in the future more "content" will be learned, the content will be learned with greater relatedness, pupils will be more creative, and they will be better behaved!—GEORGE L. MILLER in *Educational Leadership*.

Public Relations and Test Results

By CURT STAFFORD and DWIGHT SHAFER

IT IS UNDOUBTEDLY A SIGN OF VIRILITY in the teaching profession that the current criticisms of public education are being challenged by educators, but this has resulted in the public's being deluged with charges and countercharges as to the effectiveness of the public schools.

When attempting either to justify or defend the work of the schools, administrators and boards of education often have resorted to the use of standardized test results to "prove" the schools are doing a good job. The purpose of this article is to assist superintendents, guidance personnel, and other school staff members in the judicious preparation of public relations statements utilizing standardized test results.

There is one particular use of achievement test data which may lead to indefensible conclusions, conclusions which could be easily challenged and place the schools in an embarrassing situation. It is the practice of reporting test results in which local averages exceed national averages and implying that this is proof of

school excellence or that achievement of pupils is not substandard. These data alone should not be used to *prove* the schools are doing a good job. When schools whose local norms are above the national norms report only this information, they are, in all probability, deceiving the public by appearing to be better than they are. Reports of achievement test data are vulnerable at five points which allow the school's claims to be repudiated.

The first weakness is that of *achievement relative to ability*. Certain students, because of higher mental ability or richer cultural background, *should* achieve well above the average for age or grade. Others, because of limited mental ability, meager cultural background, excessive absences, or other factors, are achieving satisfactorily if their performance is a year or more *below* the national average. The research worker whose school system is of above-average ability should take this into account and compare the mean performance with the *expected* mean performance.

Unfortunately this scientific honesty virtually guarantees the school will be put in a bad light due to the statistical phenomenon of regression. The attainment of expected levels, in general, cannot be reached. This is due to imperfect correlation between intelligence and achievement, not to an imperfect execution of the school program by students or teachers. The director of research of the school with a student body generally below par, on the other hand, can point with pride to achievement above expectation, again due to regression rather than superb methods, effort, and teaching personnel. Nevertheless, no case for excellence should be based on achievement without a consideration of ability. It usually will be wisest to compare these

EDITOR'S NOTE

Here is uncommon good sense about a sharp practice. We refer to the temptation of school personnel to use the test scores of students to "prove" that their school is, or their schools are, doing a superior job. We all know that comparisons are odious, but they are particularly odious when schools take credit for above-norm performance by students on standardized tests. The authors advise all of us to look to our claims, for they may provide comeuppance. They are on the staff of the education department, State College, San Jose, California.

measures at several points of the range, not just at the mean.

A second vulnerability is based on the *concept of significance*. The variability of individual performance within a student body typically is wide while, relatively, the variability among school systems is not so great. Only rarely will a difference between local mean performance and national mean performance pass a significance test. Thus, most of these variations must be regarded as random fluctuations in samples of the same universe. The few differences which do pass significance tests usually are quickly attached to some causative factor, such as exceptional initial ability or severe cultural deprivation.

Associated with the significance concept is a rigidity trap in the interpretation of differences between group means. The unsophisticated tend to regard mean (typical) performance as *universal* performance within that group, i.e., they think in terms of all members of the group performing at the one level of the group mean. This completely obfuscates the overlapping of lower scoring members in the high average group by higher scoring members of the low average group. Lack of statistically significant mean differences is *prima facie* evidence of considerable overlap. Even where mean differences are significant, some overlap usually exists.

A third weakness is the *naïve assignment of causative factors* to continued outperformance of national norms. Naturally, schools like to think that the efforts of their personnel have a positive influence on youth. On the whole, there is no doubt they do. But mean test performance also is affected by shifting populations. Has there been an influx of a subculture which places a high value on formal education? The research worker must be alert for other possible causes.

A fourth point is the *error of regarding norms as synonymous with standards*. The only defensible position with respect to

norms is that they should be interpreted as aids in the evaluation of relative aspects of the school's program, not as standards to be attained. The evidence of outperforming national norms by a grade equivalent or by 20 percentile points is always open to counter question, "How do you know you shouldn't be 2 grade equivalents or 40 percentile points above national figures?" And maybe you should!

The final point deals with the *basic concept of norms*. National norms are nothing more than the *constructor's sample* of the defined universe, "all pupils in the country." If the sample is a true one, society is faced with the inescapable fact that "half the kids in the fifth grade are below average in reading!" a statement which is known to be true by definition. Thus for each instance of a school that reports it surpasses the national norm (whether significantly or not), it would be expected that there exists a school at a corresponding point below the norm. If such is not the case—that is, if school after school consistently exceeds the norm—the local schools cannot rightly claim credit. The phenomenon inheres in the "norming" sample selected by the test constructor. It is readily apparent that the test constructor drew a norm group which abounded in performances inferior to the genuinely typical population performance. The action indicated in this situation is to adjust the national norms by inclusion of these cases, not to cite proof of excellence of school efforts.

The above cautions need not discourage the school from reporting results of standardized tests as public relation information. School personnel simply are reminded to draw on their knowledge of statistical and measurement concepts and to provide some interpretation and explanation for the particular results when presenting this information to the public.

Perhaps the over-all objection to an argument predicated on mean local achievement equaling or surpassing national aver-

ages is that it fosters static thinking by focusing on the use of standardized tests as *ends* rather than as *means*. There are at least two ways the results of standardized tests can be used for positive public relations purposes. First, the basis of comparison with national norms can be altered to an interschool analysis of different subject areas. Thus a school-wide finding of lower achievement in mathematics than in language is diagnostic of the school system's program. It suggests areas which must be examined, areas in which judgments need to be made. If the judgment is that improvement is necessary, then remedial action may begin. If after increased effort the results of further testing evidence the desired gain, then a much more firm case has been established for school system excellence. It should be apparent that all the cautions previously discussed still need to be taken into account.

A second approach is to focus on the individual learner and consider *his* use of tests rather than *group performance* on them. Standard tests have become an integral

part of guiding the development of pupils in intellectual and vocational pursuits. They are invaluable aids in decision making. School personnel should be more concerned with showing how individuals have been helped to achieve fuller development where standard test results may have been one element in a total program. This suggests a need for follow-up data. Gathering information about the achievements of the school's graduates several years after graduation is more desirable than gathering data about the limited outcomes of teaching as measured by existing standardized tests. It is a simple case of evaluating *ultimate* objectives rather than *immediate* objectives.

Standardized tests should be valued to the extent that they provide the means for discovering specific characteristics of the educational program. When analyzed, the information may serve as a guide to an even more effective educational program. It is these dynamic aspects which should be brought before the public rather than the relatively static ones such as indicating performance superior to national norms.



Developments in the JHS Program

Among the outstanding emphases and developments emerging in junior high schools today, the following should be of particular interest:

1. Trend toward enriched academic offerings to challenge the rapid learner
2. Increased adoption of the "double-period," "block-type," or "core-type" plan
3. Continued emphasis upon the exploratory type of program
4. Increased concern for having available a wide range of instructional materials
5. Sharp increase in the beginnings of foreign-language programs using the hearing-speaking approach
6. Movement toward a seven-period day, in order to provide more flexibility in curriculum offerings

7. Greater recognition of the importance of a better understanding of the physiological and psychological nature of the early adolescent, with this knowledge being put into effective practice in terms of curriculum offerings

8. Trend toward better planning of physical-education programs for all pupils, in which daily periods are set aside for instruction in this field.

9. Vigorous effort to plan strong and systematic programs of developmental reading for all pupils, with particular attention given to remedial instruction for those reading below capacity

10. Tendency to enlist the co-operative efforts of homeroom teachers, special-subject teachers, and guidance counselors to provide an effective guidance program.—GUY WAGNER in *Education*.

THE MOTIVATED LEARNER

Reflections on Students Who "Get with It"

By JAMES K. DUNCAN

A LOOK AT A MOTIVATED HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENT is refreshing. If one looks deeply enough it is enlightening. What's behind the self-propelled learner?

Some come from good homes and families. Some don't. Some have high native ability. Some don't. Some are hard workers. Some aren't. Some have high aspirations and yet many have no particular ideas as to what they wish to accomplish. We are all aware that the motivated learner is not constantly motivated. Sometimes he catches fire in physics and can't get off the ground in English. But oftentimes he is motivated across the board whether he is interested or not.

If there is any one thing that characterizes the motivated learner, it is that when there is something to be learned, he "gets with it." This is evidence, surely, that (1) he knows what he is trying to learn and (2) has accepted the responsibility for learning it.

EDITOR'S NOTE

This is about motivation and it makes good reading for those of us who have some responsibility for in-service education of teachers. For that matter, it's just as good reading for teachers who have minds of their own about their own in-service education. The author is associate professor of secondary education, Temple University, Philadelphia. He has addressed himself to one of the most thorny of all educational problems—how to get students to be more purposeful in their learning. What a wonderful educational world this would be if a great many students didn't have to be prodded!

How does one insure that a learner knows what he is trying to learn and how does one insure that he accepts responsibility for learning? Probably with human beings we can never "insure" that students will know what they are trying to do and will take responsibility for doing it. Nonetheless, a study of the learning process suggests some answers that make good sense.

Let's assume that that which is to be learned is important. This is not always true and certainly where it is not true we ought to consider seriously whether we should be trying to teach it. But granting that our content is important, how do we help the learner see what it is he is trying to learn?

We must first help the student arrive at a *point of view* toward that which he is going to learn. In his study of the American Revolution, we may help him to see it as a fight against political, social, and economic injustice. By so doing we give him an opportunity to take a real attitude toward the history of that period. If we are teaching quadratic equations, we may say to the student, "If we can solve $ax^2 + bx + c = 0$ we can solve any quadratic equation. This is a tough nut to crack. Do you think we can do it?" Again we have given him an opportunity to take a real attitude or point of view toward that which he is to learn.

The self-propelled learner has more than a point of view toward the content. He is, in addition, oriented to it. This *orientation* is nothing more than getting that which he knows "shaken" into some kind of relation to that which he is about to learn. In the case of the American Revolution, he already knows quite a lot about it. He needs a chance to talk about and think about what

he knows in light of this new point of view. He needs to get oriented. The student we have tried to challenge with the general quadratic equation may need to see that he can solve many quadratics by factoring as he has done in the past. But when given: $x^2 + 2x - 11 = 0$, he finds that the old tools won't work. Such illustrations point up something of what he knows and something of what he doesn't know. It is in this way that what he knows and what he doesn't know begin to come clear and the student becomes oriented to the learning.

Point of view and orientation go hand in hand. As we strengthen one, we strengthen the other. But in themselves they are not sufficient. The student needs an opportunity to explore that which he is about to learn. If it is important, and we have assumed that it is, it is worth exploring. This *exploration* clarifies the topic under consideration. In the case of the American Revolution, it is legitimate to ask what these injustices were. What do we mean by political injustice? These and other aspects of the content can well be discussed. Similarly with $ax^2 + bx + c = 0$, the student needs to find out that it is not a cubic or linear equation, that a , b , and c are constants, and $a \neq 0$. He may want to know what ways are available for him to solve this general equation.

If we put *point of view*, *orientation*, and *exploration* together in an effective manner, the student should know what it is he is trying to learn. It is my personal experience that this takes more time than we often think it will. It certainly takes more time than we oftentimes give it. To help insure that the learner knows what he is trying to learn, it is worth all of the time it takes.

Not only does the motivated learner know what he is trying to learn but he has somehow miraculously accepted responsibility for learning it. What is the secret? How do high-school youngsters get up the "steam" to tackle a problem as deep as the

American struggle for independence or as rigorous as the solution of the general equation of the second degree in x ?

Part of the answer lies in his seeing what it is that he is to learn. If the learning is important in the first place and he sees it clearly, he senses its significance. He is often not aware of its ramifications, but in the kernel that he has seen he has found something quite real. A well developed *point of view*, *orientation*, and *exploration* are half the battle.

He can nevertheless reject the challenge and if he does he will not take responsibility for the learning.

It is a truism that no one can learn for the learner. He simply must do it himself. He must commit himself. He will not commit himself wholeheartedly except on his own terms. He needs, therefore, to clarify and define the problem as he sees it.

The clarification process extends the exploration but is student directed. We may ask provocative questions, encourage the use of particular sources, but basically we should be demanding of the student that he find his own problem and begin to develop his own ideas about how to deal with it.

As he looks into American history, he may find that he is interested in the role that American leaders played in the fight against injustice. He may get interested in the strategy of the colonists, both military and political. His clarification is beginning to show him something of the root nature of the problem and something of the way in which he would like to tackle it. For the student of the quadratic equation, the clarification process consists basically of some trial attempts on the problem. He may wish to create some quadratic equations which can't be solved by factoring. He may wish to review the ways he presently knows which can be used to solve equations.

By encouraging the student to clarify the problem on his own, we encourage him to accept it. Good questions, helpful leads, suggestive ideas give guidance to his quest

without directing. As clarification continues, students will, one by one, catch hold of a problem that they believe is theirs—and it will be theirs. At this stage each of them will have defined his problem.

Defining the problem sometimes calls for verbalization and sometimes does not. In the case of the quadratic equation, it probably would be a mistake to ask the student to state the problem and tell how he would go about solving it. Such talk is almost be-

side the point. In the case of the American Revolution, the verbalization of the problem the student has accepted and the means by which he will attack it may help him and help us to help him with his self-appointed task.

When he has defined his problem, the student should have an essential characteristic of the motivated learner—that is, he knows there is something to be learned and he has "gotten with it."



Memo to: Marianne, Linda, Larry, Pam, and Jim From: Mr. K.

I am happy to learn that you are planning to become teachers, for we are always pleased when our finest people pay us the compliment of choosing our profession for their own.

You have worked with me for some time now as student assistants in my guidance office at the high school and we have become quite good friends. Our activities together have included the planning of assemblies, plays, picnics, dances, games, and parties—the social side of education. But there is more to teaching than picnics and dances, and before you decide conclusively upon any career, I should like to call your attention to the one question you must each ask yourself: What do I want to gain from life?

Do you want to serve your country? Truly an admirable ambition. Do you want to serve your God? One could have no finer purpose. Perhaps you want to serve mankind—to make the world a little better place. This, too, is noble and good. Or possibly you would like to do something which will give you a deep and lasting sense of personal worth and accomplishment. And this, also, is a worth-while and honorable aspiration.

May I suggest, however, that it is not necessary to make a choice—that all of these ideals can be accomplished as a teacher, a counselor, or a coach.

Truly, you will serve your country. Although you will wear no stars, no ribbons, for courage shown or battles won, you will fight some of the most vicious enemies our country has—to face—bigotry, narrow-mindedness, and complacency.

Although much can be learned about teaching through study and practice, it has always been my belief that the best teachers are gifted with a talent for teaching, as surely as the painter or musician is gifted with his talent. I believe, also, that each of you has this gift and that you can serve God in the classroom just as a friend and former student of mine is serving Him in a little mission church in Africa.

It has become common for us to think of physicians' serving mankind in many fine, and often glamorous, ways. But you, as a teacher, can serve your fellow man equally well. Just as the surgeon with his scalpel cuts out the deadly cancer, you, by word and by example, can help to destroy the terrible malignancies of hatred, violence, ignorance, and greed.

There will be, of course, many tedious hours of time-consuming work. You will learn to be many people—curriculum planner, substitute parent, paper checker, trusted confidant, records clerk, confessor, workbook vendor, the friend with a smile, the ogre with a reprimand.

You will be the greatest person on earth when report-card marks are good, and the meanest tiger in the jungle when they aren't.

What was the fourth goal? Personal satisfaction? I know of no other work that offers more in the way of self-realization than teaching.

EDWARD R. KRIVDA
Parma Senior High School
Parma, Ohio

≡ TRICKS OF THE TRADE ≡

Edited by TED GORDON

WHO DUN IT, BY GEOFFREY: Completing a unit of work on Chaucer, I often allow several members of the class to bring an original skit of imaginary conversation among several characters from the prologue of *The Canterbury Tales*; for example, the miller, wife of Bath, friar, and sailor (birds of a feather). Each character dresses his part, and "à la Chaucer" his conversation reflects his character. The other students, after deciding by careful observation and checking which characters are being portrayed, enjoy making a list of all the ways in which this assignment has been successfully accomplished.—THELMA CARNS, Jones Valley High School, Birmingham, Alabama.

HISTORY: As an introduction to American history I have each pupil draw and color a map of his native state. Sometimes when there are too many from the same state, we select that of one of the parents. They also make a replica of the state flag. These make attractive room decorations as well as serving to familiarize us with the flags of different states and the size and shape of states, which leads to easy recognition of them.—MISS M. O. HAASE, P.O. Box 396, Biloxi, Mississippi.

TRANSLATING: While translating Caesar's *Gallic Wars* with my sophomores, we read the selection in Latin first, then we look for the subject and the main verb. After this we look for the words that modify each other and have the same case endings. I compare these findings with a pile of washed but unsorted socks that need to be matched, saying to my students, "Here's a pair of pink socks that go together, here's a pair of argyles, here's a green pair," etc. They also take up the trick when they find

modifying words that belong together.—SISTER MARY XAVIER, O.S.U., Saint Mary's High School, Cumberland, Maryland.

MAIL ORDER CATALOGUES: Teachers who fail to bring mail order catalogues into the classroom are overlooking wonderful teaching aids. What better motivation than an assignment to order all the things a child would like to have for Christmas. Ordering things from the catalogue will be fun at any time and can be a worthwhile learning experience as well. Skills which can be quite painlessly developed in the process include: use of an index, addition and subtraction, certainly multiplication, use of a postage rate table, writing checks and money orders, spelling, and penmanship. Considerable useful information can also be gleaned through the use of the catalogue—knowledge of colors, fabrics, methods of determining clothing sizes, to name just a few.—ONAS SCANDRETTE, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois.

PERSONAL PROBLEMS: Many student solve their pressing personal problems by applying the situation to an imaginary person and his family. By thinking through and writing down the specific problem, they are more objective in analyzing its probable cause and its possible solution.—HELEN E. DEANS, Demonstration School, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Readers are invited to submit aids and devices which may be of help to others. Brief, original ideas are preferred; if an item is not original, be sure to give your source. This publication reserves all rights to material submitted, and no items will be returned. Address contributions to THE CLEARING HOUSE.

A Home Room Teaches a Teacher

By FLOYD H. PRICE

"I WAS NOT TRAINED to be a home-room sponsor," is heard from teachers in almost every school that has a home-room program. I shared this almost universal feeling, when early in the spring of 1958 I received my assignment and found that an eighth-grade home room was a part of it. This group had not had an organized home-room program the previous year but simply used the thirty-two-minute home-room period once each week for a study hall. With this background the task appeared to be even more difficult.

Suggestions from other home-room teachers and magazine articles were helpful to me in gaining an understanding of the home-room organization and its purposes, but this help was vague. A collection of books and materials that might be of use was begun. Still not confident and satisfied with these helps, I enrolled in a summer-school class in "The Junior High School," to determine more concretely the place and function of the home room in the junior high school.

Before school began, I sometimes found myself almost anxious to give some of this newly acquired knowledge a good try. I

had concluded that the purposes of the home room were really simple in nature. First, the home room should be the student's school home—a place where a student can feel important as an individual regardless of his successes or failures, his achievements or problems. The student should understand that the home room is conducted in a businesslike way with rules to obey, but in a friendly setting. Second, the home room should provide a place for developing social and moral attitudes not otherwise emphasized in the curriculum. The students learn through conversing, planning, and working together in a relaxed atmosphere.

When school opened and I met with the thirty eighth graders assigned to my home room I soon found that they were not nearly so enthusiastic about the home-room idea as their teacher. Two home-room periods were spent in activities that would help the students new to this home room to get acquainted and help the sponsor become acquainted with the students. After these two informal meetings the home-room teacher decided it was time to explain the purposes and functions of the home room, and to make some general future plans. The group did not respond as the teacher had expected. They would have been perfectly satisfied to continue to use the period for a study hall as they had done in the seventh grade. This was all they knew. This had been the limit of their experience.

Determined not to give up this easily, a film was planned for the next home-room day. A ten-minute color film, "Developing Friendships," was shown and the last half of the period was used to discuss what they had seen. The film brought out the meaning of friendship and the differences in individual capacities for friendliness. The thirteen-year-old student is very much interested in making and keeping friends. The

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What's the matter with the home room in many schools? Plenty. Is it one of the weaker links in the teaching chain? Yes, it seems to be. Why? For one thing, it is often looked upon as of less value than a class. Also, there is no report-card mark for home room.

It takes time and organizing ability for a teacher to be an effective home-room sponsor. Is it worth it? Read what the writer of this article says in response to this question. Then, decide whether home-room sponsorship is worth it. The author is a teacher of business education, Mead Intermediate School, Wichita, Kansas.

film showed the students how friendship brings a greater appreciation of people despite varied backgrounds. The film was well received by the students and a lively discussion followed during the last half of the period. After three meetings with what one might call "teacher-forced" activity, some members of the group were beginning to take an active part in the discussions and were suggesting topics for discussion.

Pupils need to feel that they have the real responsibility for the success of the home-room program. Therefore, it seemed wise, at this point, for the group to elect officers and to begin planning programs for themselves. An entire home-room period was devoted to the discussion of the qualifications needed for success in the various offices, with nominations and the election of officers scheduled for the next meeting. A capable group of officers were elected, who immediately took charge of the home-room program and with help and guidance from the sponsor carried out a successful program during the year.

One year and many mistakes later, the same teacher and the same home-room group were again ready for the opening of another school year. The students were now ninth graders and, along with their teacher, had learned a great deal about the home-room idea. Working with the same home-room group opened up many opportunities that would have been impossible with a new group.

During orientation week the home-room sponsor met with a group of officers from the previous year to discuss plans for the ninth-grade home-room program. Some of their suggested improvements were: Elect officers for a short term of office in order to give more students a chance to hold office; spend more than one period on a topic; try to get everyone interested and participating in the program; have more home-room parties, invite more outside speakers. During the ensuing year many of these suggestions were put into practice. The idea of electing

officers each nine weeks was tried, but at the end of the first semester the group decided that a one-semester term of office would be more satisfactory.

At the end of the first ninth-grade semester a mimeographed evaluation sheet was prepared to give the students an opportunity to express their feelings about the home-room programs. Such suggestions as the following were made: Plan films that do not take the entire period, so they can be discussed the same day they are shown; prepare a calendar for the year with tentative plans for each home-room program on the calendar so that everyone knows in advance what the program for each home-room period is; provide a suggestion box, which should be available at all times so the students do not have to wait for the teacher to ask them for suggestions.

Seeing the students take the initiative to plan their own programs was most gratifying, and quite a change from the eighth-grade situation. By now some of the theories and ideas expressed in the books and magazines were actually producing results, but the job was by no means so easy as they made it seem. In working with small groups and in helping committees with their plans, a sponsor is able to give personal counseling when needed. This individual guidance is only one part of a sponsor's responsibility. He is also responsible, through group guidance, for trying to reach the individual who does not work on committees or in the small groups, and who is not receptive to individual counseling.

Some tentative conclusions from two years of experience are these: (1) Every situation is different, and what works for one home-room teacher will not work for another. For this reason, a teacher cannot take a home-room plan used by another teacher, or one prepared by the administration or the guidance staff, and try to follow it exactly. (2) The key to a successful home-room program is hard work and good planning by the sponsor. (3) It is possible to

overplan and overorganize. The students must be included in the planning, but students of junior high age will need a great deal of guidance from the home-room teacher. (4) The plans should be flexible enough to make full use of spontaneous situations that arise from day to day. (5) If home-room teachers would apply the same zeal, interest, and planning to the home room as they do to the academic subjects they teach, a great change would come about in the effectiveness of the home-room program.

To the beginning home-room teacher, perhaps the following suggestions will be of some value: First, and most important, be sure that you understand the purpose and function of the home-room program and that you believe in its potential values. Second, do not expect too much at first. Good results will not come immediately, but do not be discouraged. Third, begin by explaining the home-room program—its opportunities, its possibilities, and its limitations. Many home-room failures could be prevented if both teacher and students understood and accepted the purposes of the home room. Continue to impress upon the students that this is their period. Fourth, remember that the home room is not a panacea; it will not solve all problems.

Fifth, as sponsor remain in the background, allowing the students to assume leadership responsibilities. Sixth, do not feel that you must have a planned program each week. Be sure that the problems for discussion are student problems, not teacher problems. Avoid stereotype programs. Seventh, do not jump from subject to subject too fast. As an example, do not discuss grooming one week, going to college the next, and sportsmanship the third. Each subject should be developed in an interesting way over a period of time in an unhurried manner. Finally, do not give up after a few attempts and let the home-room period disintegrate into a study period.

The success of a good home room depends upon the same basic factors that make for success in any supervised group learning situation. Each teacher and administrator participating in the program must accept the purposes of the program and be enthusiastic, not only about the home-room program but about the teaching profession. The home-room sponsor needs to be vitally interested in young people and to feel that he is assisting the home-room boys and girls to make a better adjustment to their physical and social surroundings, and to make wise academic and personal decisions for themselves.



Guidance Is Teaching

Obviously the role of the teacher is important to the guidance program, and is of utmost importance to the survival of the school itself.

A teacher, the key person in any guidance program, is often the victim of a "closed corporation" in a school system. Small cliques form and one by one they manage to appear in key positions in the administration and guidance programs in a particular school. I have seen this happen. . . .

This situation points out the necessity for a clear definition of roles in the school.

Usually, a trained person must take the responsibility of training a school staff to assume their roles in the overall guidance program.

What can the teacher do? Interested teachers might form a guidance committee. They could do research, enroll in guidance workshops, and report on their findings to their administrators.

Experience gained in compiling the report will prove valuable to the teachers. In the final analysis they may see their role as the key persons in the guidance program.

Teachers should use the guidance point of view in their instructional methodology. They should observe their pupils closely in order to know their abilities. They should recognize that the teacher's role in guidance is, indeed, a vital one.—PAUL L. GARDNER in *Ohio Schools*.

Reading Skills for Slow Learners in Junior and Senior High School

By

ROBERT KARLIN

SLOW LEARNERS ARE CHILDREN whose intelligence quotient is between 80 and 95. "The slow learners are the highest intellectual group of retarded children and are largest in number. They form the 15 to 17 per cent of the school population that cannot quite 'keep up' and are usually doing the poorest work in the regular classroom. Slow learners are essentially normal in their emotional, social, physical, and motor development. Even in intellectual development the slow learners are at the lower fringe or range of the normal group. Thus, while they are retarded and consequently have difficulty in 'keeping up' with the rest of the class, their deviation is not so great that they cannot be adequately educated in a regular classroom situation."¹

Slow learners are distinguished from the mentally handicapped and the mentally deficient. The mentally handicapped are normal or within the normal range in most areas of their development; their primary deviation is in the area of intellectual growth, where development is significantly retarded. Two to three per cent of school population are mentally handicapped. Mentally deficient children are those who as a group can do very little, if any, academic work, although some are known to have reached second-grade level in reading. Their I.Q. range has been set arbitrarily between 25 and 50.²

Thus, when we teach reading to slow learners we are dealing with a group of

children who do not learn so rapidly as most normal and gifted children but who are capable of mastering many reading skills associated with growth in school and sharing the joys of reading for pleasure. Hence their reading needs at the junior- and senior-high-school levels will be as varied as the needs of the other students in these schools. Just as we find that the reading ability of secondary-school students generally covers a wide range, so may we expect a similar range among the slow learners. There exists one major difference, however, between these two groups: A larger proportion of slow learners will be found at the lower ranges of the scale and a smaller proportion at the upper ranges.

What factors may account for this difference? One is the very variable which sets apart the slow learner from the others. While the possession of no one mental age is a guarantee of reading success, there is sufficient evidence to support the conclusion that a significant relationship exists between intelligence as measured by existing instruments and growth in reading. We may expect the children who possess the ability to profit from academic work to be the achievers in reading. Conversely, children whose mental ages are below expected levels of development may not experience equal success over similar periods of time. The more gifted ordinarily, though not always, will outdistance the less endowed ones.

A second factor has to do with school influences. Many of the slow learners who enter first grade possess a mental age of about five years. A considerable number of them are not ready to profit from the kind

¹ W. M. Cruickshank and G. O. Johnson (eds.), *Education of Exceptional Children and Youth* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1958), p. 190.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 191, 237.

of instruction that is being offered and fail to acquire sufficient reading skills to enable them to advance into the next higher level. These children, along with some others, often fail to receive the differentiated instruction that is crucial at these lower levels. And they continue to fail to learn. Since appropriate provisions are not made for them at each successive grade level and since a policy of promotion prevails, they find themselves in seventh grade. They are unable to cope with the demands of the curriculum.

Another group of slow learners acquire some of the basic reading skills but do not progress much beyond this level. In too many schools, formal reading instruction ends at the end of the third or fourth grades. Without additional instruction, the slow learners are doomed to remain in the depths of the reading continuum. They suffer a fate not unlike some of their other age peers who have greater ability to deal with intellectual matters.

A note of caution. Some slow learners are reading as well as one might expect. Even though they may not be achieving the norm for the grade in which they find themselves, they are doing as well as they can for the moment. If we assume that no factors save the intellectual ones are interfering with learning, then we may apply a simple formula to ascertain the level that these pupils may be expected to reach:

$$\text{number of years in school} \times \frac{\text{I.Q.}}{100} + 1.$$

Thus a child with an I.Q. of 80 who is entering ninth grade in September would have an expectancy reading level of approximately middle seventh grade. If he achieves this status he is not considered to be retarded in reading. Of course this is no suggestion that additional instruction would not be of help to him. But the youngster who is pushed to achieve beyond his present limits may suffer damage that can be difficult to remedy.

Reading Programs. If we keep in mind that the slow learner is capable of learning how to read but not perhaps at the rate at which children of normal or superior intelligence can, then it is not too difficult to plan a program of instruction for him. By the time he reaches the junior high school, he is bound to be behind the normally developed readers. If he does not receive the benefit of help during these junior-high-school years, he is likely to fall behind further as he prepares to enter senior high school. It is difficult at times to distinguish the slow learners from the seriously disabled

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For many years the phrases "slow learner" and "fast learner" have appeared in educational literature. The fast learners are better known now as the academically talented students. The slow learners are still known as the slow learners.

There are really three kinds of students in many classrooms. The largest group is the "great middle," who proceed satisfactorily, grade by grade through school. Then, there are the deviates—the fast and the slow. They do not proceed like the middle group. They differ in pace of learning.

We have not yet made up our minds as to the best way to accommodate the fast and slow learner. Some experts argue for horizontal enrichment with or without ability grouping. Others plead for vertical enrichment and selective acceleration or deceleration. Others say that we should educate the educable and let those who cannot profit fail out of school.

No one method for the fast or slow learner seems to predominate. Maybe that's good. We don't presume to know. But we are confident that very few slow learners have a high competency in basic skills of English language arts. And that brings us to the matter at hand here. The author is professor of education and co-ordinator of the reading center, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.

readers with normal or superior intellectual endowment. Just as we would take the latter group from the point at which they are, regardless of their grade placement, so would we need to know the present status of the slow learners and initiate teaching there. A careful diagnosis of the reading needs of these slow learners should, of course, be made *before* the attempt to teach them. It is hardly realistic to present for instructional purposes materials which will serve only to frustrate the reader. It is equally unrealistic to concentrate upon higher level skills when major deficiencies exist in the lower level ones.

Although a total program in reading consists of many elements, a considerable number of slow learners in secondary schools will manifest word recognition as their critical weakness. These pupils are reading failures simply because they do not have an adequate stock of sight words and are unable to apply word-identification skills that will permit them to unlock unknown words. Seriously disabled readers of higher intellectual development often demonstrate this same weakness. Blocks of time during which a sight vocabulary is built and word-recognition skills are taught need to be set aside for these children. Another caution: These skills should be taught using materials which are pegged at the reader's instructional level. All too frequently we try to teach reading skills with materials which are inappropriate—that is, too difficult for the reader.

These same children may have comprehension difficulties as well as word-identification weaknesses. Obviously, concentrated efforts would be made in whatever areas they showed themselves deficient.

Not unlike other youngsters in junior and senior high school, some slow learners need help in overcoming weaknesses in the study skills and specific aspects of meanings. Only by determining what these weaknesses are and providing suitable instruction will progress toward resolving them be noted.

The growth of slow learners may not be so rapid as that of others, but they are bound to advance as their needs are met.

Of what does a balanced reading program for the junior and senior high schools consist? It involves experiences which contribute to the development of diversified skills in and positive attitudes toward reading. Its many facets extend in different directions to encompass the entire curriculum. The categorization of reading habits and skills into specific learning tasks is useful for instructional purposes. The identification of them permits the teacher to concentrate on those aspects in which pupils are weak. Six major areas are discernible: (1) word recognition; (2) meanings; (3) study skills; (4) appreciation; (5) interests; and (6) speed.

A balanced program for slow learners will include each of these areas, for they require a balance in their reading no less than normal or advanced readers. They need to learn how to attack unknown words in a variety of ways and in combination; they must learn the meanings of words in context and derive deeper meanings from what they read; they must learn to react in a reasonable way to printed materials; they need to learn how to locate and organize information; they must learn how to appreciate literature of many kinds; they need to learn to adjust their rate of reading to their purpose for reading and the nature of the material; they need to have the opportunity to share their reading with others, evaluate what they read, and extend their reading tastes. They need help in reaching all of these goals. What they require also is the patience and understanding that each of us can give to them. They will journey along the road of reading as far as they are able, though not so far, perhaps, as others. But opportunities for developing to their fullest must be present.

Where shall all this instruction be provided? Some of it may occur in special English classes, where children with similar

abilities and needs meet. Some may occur in the subject-matter classes, where students receive help in reading textbooks and in learning skills peculiar to specific subject matter. Some may occur in the library, which is in a sense an extension of the classroom. And some may be offered in a specially established location where small groups of learners meet to overcome their reading deficiencies. In short, the entire school participates in raising the reading levels of these children who, within a brief period of time, will be called upon to take their places as citizens in an ever demanding society. The likelihood that those slow learners will go on to conquer other academic worlds is not great; however, the growth of each should be nourished to its fullest.

Methods of Teaching. How shall reading be taught to slow learners? Are special methods needed for teaching them? Although there is no one method of teaching reading, some may be superior to others in that they come closer to being in harmony with known principles of learning. We do know something about the conditions under which learning is more likely to occur. Although some children progress in spite of the type of instruction they receive, a large number require suitable learning climates. Such conditions of learning are recommended especially for slow learners. Learning to read cannot be left to chance. Too many slow learners have fallen victims to such a rationale.

What are some of these conditions of learning which should be translated through the teaching of reading? One important condition is preparation for undertaking a given task. This preparation involves knowledge and understanding, motivation, and goal seeking. New learning is an outgrowth of old learning, and the latter is used as a basis for understanding new principles and ideas. We all know that the learner who does not want to learn is not likely to learn. We know also that purpose

facilitates learning. Some children are prepared to learn just for the sake of learning, but there appear to be too few of these in the upper grades. Many need a real purpose or goal that is attainable.

Readiness for reading has been associated with beginning reading, but readiness operates at all levels of reading instruction. In teaching children to understand a selection, teachers may deal with four areas in preparing pupils for the reading. These are:

- (1) Building an experimental background for understanding the events and characters.
- (2) Clarifying unknown concepts.
- (3) Introducing difficult vocabulary.
- (4) Setting a purpose for reading.

Meaningful learning is preferred to rote learning or isolated learning since it is more lasting and is more likely to be used in other situations. If children really are to understand what they read, they must be able to tie the meanings of words to experience. One writer recalls the fourth-grade youngster who read about the army officer who provided his men with "quarters for the night." We can easily understand his visual picture of the officer handing each soldier a 25-cent piece to pay for his lodging. Teachers need to provide children with many concrete experiences. When the actual concrete experience is not possible, the use of films, pictures, and other materials is recommended. Words that are used to describe other words may or may not provide the meaning.

Structured material has more meaning for the learner than unstructured material. When we wish pupils to recognize a new word or learn its meaning, the word should be introduced in a contextual setting. They will learn the word more easily and more quickly under such conditions.

Principles or rules are easily forgotten by children if they do not understand them. How many children fail to divide one fraction by another fraction correctly? How many adults will not be able to perform the

same operation! When we wish to teach rules, let us help the pupils formulate them. For example, rather than inform children that the vowel sound in a one-syllable word is usually long if the word ends with an *e*, it is better to provide many such words and help the pupils see what these words have in common. From these common elements pupils and teacher arrive at the generalization which governs the vowel sound.

Guided learning is preferred to trial-and-error learning, especially during the early stages. It helps to avoid the reinforcement of incorrect responses. If we are introducing a reading skill for the first time, a good plan is to withhold independent practice until we have some assurance that pupils can perform. Work out many exercises together before assigning independent work.

There are times when interference blocks learning. Interference may occur when material can evoke more than one reaction. The young learner finds it difficult to distinguish between stimuli which are similar. Many children confuse one word for another, e.g. *through* and *thought*, *while* and *white*. It is better to introduce them separately rather than together. After one is learned, the other may be taught. Children who have word-recognition problems will benefit from this treatment.

The teacher has it within his power to enable pupils to attain legitimate success. The simplest method is to arrange the material in easy gradations. In other words, we need to move from simple learnings to more complex learnings. This is especially evident in skills learning. A good example

of graded lessons may be found in teaching word structure. Pupils should know how to divide words into syllables, since this knowledge facilitates the unlocking of unknown words. It is easier to learn to divide a two-syllable word than a three-syllable word. Pupils will learn to deal more readily with words which contain the double consonant, e.g., *apple*, than with words which contain vowel-consonant-vowel, e.g., *hotel*. There should be no question about which type of word is taught first. In the upper grades we formally begin to teach children to organize material by having them write summaries or make simple outlines. The ability to organize depends upon another ability which must be learned first—the ability to select important ideas and related details. To reverse the order of teaching would violate the ideas of sequence and gradation. We must break down skills into smaller skills and teach them in order of difficulty.

Summary. Slow learners are increasingly becoming a concern of the secondary schools. The realization that these children compose a considerable percentage of the total school population and that their presence in high school is likely to continue has led teachers to plan programs which are suited to their abilities and needs. These plans and programs are designed to help promote maximum growth. Teaching slow learners to read with understanding and thereby enabling them to experience some successes in school is part of this design. Each teacher has it within his power to make such successes possible.



Today, as in all ages, freedom of inquiry promises creative living, not false security. It holds nothing for the cynical or jaded. One of its rewards is the anxiety that comes from knowing that one does not *know*. Patrick Henry took note of this fact when he said: "For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth." This, then, is the first step toward free inquiry, the willingness to know.—B. J. CHANDLER in *Phi Delta Kappan*.

Don't Downgrade the Lecture

By ARTHUR A. DELANEY

FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS, the lecture method of instruction has been regarded as strictly taboo in American high schools. Recently, this method has been under attack in our nation's colleges and universities. Actually, there really is no conclusive pedagogical argument for placing the lecture in moth balls. Yet many educators raise their voices in holy terror when the lecture form of teaching is mentioned.

Too often the lecture method has given way to the "panel discussion," a method in which aimless, time-consuming conversation has often replaced the verbal presentation of authoritative concepts—concepts that should be based upon a solid foundation of research. And here lies one of the genuine criticisms of the lecture: Many lecturers are poorly prepared, having little knowledge of the subject matter about which they are

purporting to lecture. Too often the lecture recapitulates, at its best, what may be read in an easily accessible reference work. At its worst, the lecture merely repeats or regurgitates what may be found in the course textbook.

Then, there is the problem of timing, voice, and intensity. Many teachers are not equipped, either by inclination or temperament, to be good lecturers. The lecturer must know his students, and be able to use the illustrations and words that would be most meaningful to his audience. But are these problems the fault of the lecture method or of the lecturer? It is obvious that one aspect of teacher-training programs should be the preparation of good teachers to lecture.

Why should we re-employ the lecture method in our high schools and continue its use in our colleges? First of all, it gives the opportunity to convey information that is not available in other ways; sometimes the lecture is often the *only* way to pass on new materials and information. Then, the lecture affords an opportunity for the instructor to summarize or to relate a range of materials, for it may be too time consuming for the students to do a large amount of reading to get only a few points. The lecturer is in a position to pull out material, to interpret, to summarize, and to show the relationships of ideas and facts. Furthermore, the lecturing instructor has the unique opportunity to present old or well-known material in a new way or in a new slant.

Some opponents of the lecture method of instruction are quick to emphasize that it would be better for the student to spend his time in reading or discussing material, since a lecture results only in his daydreaming. Actually, the lecture gives the student a

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The professor suggested that the students put down their pens and close their notebooks. He then announced that he was going to lecture to them, that the reason for asking them not to take notes was that he wanted them to pay attention to the things he was about to say.

The fault with lecturing, dear Brutus, is that it is so often done poorly. Nothing is harder to endure than a dull lecture; but why should a lecture be dull? No reason at all except that the speaker organizes it randomly, has little to say, and doesn't say it well.

The author believes that lecturing is an art that involves a heavy responsibility on the part of the lecturer. Don't forsake the lecture, he pleads. He is an instructor in geography, New Hyde Park Memorial High School, New Hyde Park, New York.

chance to sit and think. Yet even "day-dreaming" has its advantage when the student listens to, and thinks with, the lecturer. Without a doubt, a good lecturer stimulates critical thinking within the minds of his students.

Other opponents contend that the lecture creates passivity on the part of the student. There is another side to this academic coin. Of the many charges recently leveled against the American educational system, one argument claims that our students are losing the ability to listen accurately. A lecture requires the student to be physically passive, but mentally alert. The student's role as a listener may be just as active and exciting as when he participates in a heated class discussion. Without a doubt, the lecture method places more responsibility for learning on the student than on the instructor. This is especially so if the student

knows the purpose of the lecture—that is, the value of the lecture to himself. A good lecturer will be able to stimulate this awareness among his pupils.

In certain academic areas, the spoken word can build attitudes and establish concepts that no other instructional method can. This writer is by no means proposing the sole use of the lecture method. Some subjects will lend themselves to lecturing more readily than will others. The lecture method is more likely to be used in a chemistry section than in a class devoted to public speaking. Teachers, however, seldom employ one method of instruction, for a method of instruction is only "good" or "bad" in terms of what the instructor is trying to achieve. Where the lecture method is advantageous, it should be used. Do not forsake it because some educators regard it as having gone out of fashion.



The Character of a Teacher

In spite of everything we have already said about the awesome task of being a teacher, we now say that he must also be a public servant. He is not *only* a teacher but may also be a parent, a citizen, a voter, and a community-minded person. Somehow his effectiveness in the classroom is greatly hindered if he is insensitive to his responsibilities as a citizen. He is really not worthy as a teacher if he fails to do something for the society, the traditions, which have given him the privilege of a free public school.

Unless he is sensitive to the responsibilities of a citizen in a democratic nation and does something for his nation's welfare he teaches wrong ideas by his own default of example.

When a teacher really understands the place of free public education in our society he will want to do something to improve education and educators. Such understanding manifests itself in his memberships in local, state, national, and his own subject-matter professional organizations. Such membership

is not just a maudlin attachment for selfish gain but an active effort to serve the cause.

Thus the teacher gives himself, he loses himself in his work, he lives for the pupils, he thinks of himself as privileged to have a small part in the enlightening of the minds of the future. He is in a *vocation*, a calling. He sees the errors in our educational system and in our society but as a public servant he works creatively for the advancement of educational opportunity for all and for the improvement of the society which nurtures our schools.

I am suggesting that quality teaching issues from high quality persons who, as teachers, are introspective scholars, specialists in a field and broadly educated generally, effective communicators, and self-forgetful public servants. Furthermore, it is my contention that these traits are observable and roughly measurable. They are in great demand, short in supply, and the responsibility of all of us who accept the designation as educators.—A. G. BREIDENSTINE in *Pennsylvania School Journal*.

So They're Writing Term Papers

By EVELYN CORNISH

HAVE YOU ASSIGNED ANY TERM PAPERS LATELY? If you can't recall, your public or school librarian probably can—and vividly! Under pressures toward “higher standards,” “intellectualizing the curriculum,” and “getting them ready for college,” teachers in high schools, junior highs, and even the upper elementary grades are now requiring long, formally written, documented papers on anything from the life history of the salmon to the control of alcoholism, the social reforms of eighteenth century England, or the marriage customs of the ancient Egyptians. And of course, as they should do, these students go from the classroom to the nearest library to begin their quest.

Many young people, by the time they leave high school, have learned to handle this type of assignment with considerable skill. Many others, alas, have learned only to copy pages of dimly comprehended words from the nearest encyclopedia, blithely willing to break off in the midst of an exposition, a paragraph, nay, even a sentence, when the minimum number of words acceptable to the teacher has been reached. A few fortunate and well-beloved youths have persuaded a doting mother or

current girl friend to “do” their papers at the public library, while they themselves attend basketball practice or eat hamburgers with their cronies at Joe's Drive-in. The beautifully organized, neatly typed masterpieces produced in this way are a revelation to the teacher accustomed only to the grubby, semiliterate efforts made by these same students in class.

If we librarians view this type of assignment with some alarm, it is not because we are unwilling to work at finding materials for students, or are reluctant to have too many of them invade our quiet quarters. What disturbs us is not the volume of work. Rather it is the unnecessary frustration of students unprepared for their task, and the shoddy, superficial, muddled quality of much that is done under the name “term paper.” According to librarians, some teachers assign obscure topics to large classes, giving little thought to guiding the work in progress except to stress that the paper must be of a certain length and contain so many bibliographic entries. Apparently these teachers are willing to accept whatever plagiarized material the student hands in, without question. If this be raising educational standards, perhaps they should be lowered again to a realistic level!

One reason for the ineffectiveness of many term-paper assignments is that teachers, on the whole, have not been prepared to direct students in this particular activity. Their expectations are usually based on what they themselves were able to do, as college students, using well-stocked college libraries. Without thinking much about it, the teacher expects to find the same plentiful source materials at hand in the small school or public library. He forgets that organizing and presenting information in term-paper form is a complex task, particu-

EDITOR'S NOTE

The author is librarian at a junior high school and supervises elementary-school libraries in Bellingham, Washington. She wrote the article after conversations with other school and public librarians about “the intellectual dishonesty fostered by careless and superficial handling” of term-paper assignments. Brava! Mrs. Cornish. We are always interested in an article that expresses righteous indignation and at the same time says something worth while.

larly for students accustomed to writing only the briefest examples of informal personal essays, or "themes." While librarians can help the student find what he needs, only the teacher can make an effective assignment and supervise its completion as he would any daily assignment or shop project.

When you assign your next term paper, presumably it will be for one or more of these reasons: (1) You believe it will add to the students' knowledge of your subject; (2) you feel it will strengthen their ability to locate information for themselves; and (3) you believe it will further develop their ability to organize and communicate that information in written form. If your students have little understanding of your subject, are completely unacquainted with reference techniques, or have poor writing ability, you would do well to plan a simpler assignment. Requiring a lengthy and formal term paper will force such students to do poor and probably dishonest work.

If you decide to go ahead with the term paper, you will need to do some advance work. Who would think of starting merrily off on a field trip of even an hour's duration without some advance teaching, and without making arrangements with the personnel of the industry to be visited? Yet the greatest complaint of librarians in this area is that teachers rarely consult or notify them of term-paper assignments, and still more rarely visit the library before the die is cast.

Do a little scouting in your school library before you talk with your librarian. Take time to look up a few of your projected topics in the card catalogue, and move from there to the indicated sections of shelving. Check the reference section to find what general sources, such as encyclopedias, are available, and what special books there are in your subject field. What magazines does your library keep on file, and for how many years? Is there an index available?

Now you are ready to talk to your librarian about your plans. What does she think

of the subjects you have in mind? Will there be enough material for the number of students concerned? She can also tell you how much instruction in the use of the encyclopedia, card catalogue, and indexes your students have had. Can your whole class be scheduled to the library for a period or two, or will students need passes from study hall? Will the librarian be able to review library skills with them? Can certain materials be taken to your classroom or placed on reserve? Does your assignment conflict with that of another teacher planning to use the same materials?

Even though your school library may be small, it is good practice to send your students there first. Once they have mastered the basic reference skills, they can begin work in any library without initial help. It is more economical to teach them these skills at school, in a group, than to expect the public library staff to do this for each individual student as he comes to the library.

Do not fail, however, to make contact with your public library. Ask your school librarian how to do this; many school and public libraries have set up systems of working together on such requests. The large public library may have a staff member assigned to work with schools. Unless you are a regular patron of the public library and familiar with its holdings, plan to make a preliminary visit there, too. Take along a brief fact sheet giving your name, the assigned topics, number of students and grade level, and date when the assignment is due. This will assure your students the best possible help.

Remember that even though your own library is small, it can usually obtain additional material for your work from larger libraries through interlibrary loan. You may find you are eligible for such service from a large county library unit or from your state library. Requests should be made at least three weeks ahead for best results. Needless to say, you should educate students

to take good care of such specially loaned materials and to return them on time.

When you make your assignment, allow students considerable choice of topics, and guide their choices, considering the ability of the student as well as the material available. The best student in a biology class might work on studies of mutations due to radiation, while his slower neighbor prepares a simple life story of some animal. An average student in a U.S. history group might be writing about the early life of George Washington, while a more capable student is investigating methods used to finance the Revolutionary armies. A good practice is to ask each class member to submit two or three possible topics, and then to make a preliminary survey of materials before telling you his final choice.

Before students begin work in the library, make some suggestions about note taking. This is the time to discuss bibliographies and the problem of acknowledging sources of quotations. Make sure each student understands he is merely to take notes and to write an *original* paper using his notes to prove his points.

If your whole class can be accommodated in the library at once, this is a good way to get everyone to begin promptly. But don't take this time to leave your students with the librarian and go to the cafeteria for that extra cup of coffee! By watching them tackle this new task, you can learn a good deal about work habits and the sort of help needed.

If your public library is accessible to a large number of your students, why not set aside an hour or two one evening when you will be there to help them? This will be an educational experience for you, too, if you have never observed one or two reference assistants struggling to give help to from ten to fifty high-school students and the few hardy adult patrons willing to compete with youth's demands.

You will want to set not one, but two, deadlines. The first, and probably most im-

portant, is the date on which students will hand in their notes and rough drafts for a quick checking. Be very definite about one thing: *No finished paper will be accepted unless you have first checked a rough draft several days in advance.* Notes will not be neat, the trial copy will be patched and scribbled, but it will be each student's own work. You need not read every word, but make a check for general progress, give suggestions on organization, and mark composition errors you detect.

Now you are ready to talk about form requirements for the finished paper. If possible, prepare a mimeographed sheet with examples and explanations. The primary aim should be a clearly written, interesting paper, which sums up what the student has learned from his reading. Form should be secondary; but whatever requirements you do establish should be followed *exactly*.

If you want honest work, do not set rigid requirements on the length of papers or the number of reference sources to be used. Every librarian has heard remarks like these:

"I've already written my paper but I have to have three more sources."

"This material looks good, but I don't think it's 3,000 words, and that's what I have to have."

"Can you help me find a short magazine article? I need fifty more words."

Remember that some topics require longer treatments; that some writers have a terse style while others ramble and elaborate. There is little value in fake bibliography entries, made to satisfy a numerical requirement. To prod the lazy or timid, you can make some general requirement, such as the use of some sources outside the encyclopedia, or one or more magazine articles. Point out that a good source list strengthens a paper, but that it should contain only material that actually was useful to the writer.

If younger students have previously done a great deal of paste-and-scissors work on

notebooks, emphasize the fact that a term paper does not have illustrations, except possibly diagrams drawn by the author to explain intricate processes. Such embellishments, along with the fancy cover beloved by many, simply mean the student has not spent his time on the contents.

Your own grading policies will determine the value you place on the papers submitted. Many teachers feel it is wise to use two grades, one for content and a less important one for form and documentation. Remember that term papers, properly done, represent hours of student time and should be carefully graded. When you return the papers, take time to discuss with students the work they have done, what they gained from it, what they found especially difficult. Be sure that good papers are displayed in the classroom, the library, or the school showcase. One teacher I know took time and postage to send several excellent papers to parents with a note of commendation. One of these went to parents who had received a poor work slip in the same way during a previous grading period.

As you complete the term-paper project, take time to make a repeat visit to your librarian. This is an excellent time to offer suggestions about new materials to be added to the library, and to pass on constructive comments from students. In turn, get her ideas on how to improve the unit when it is taught again. If you have used reserve materials, or students have used interlibrary loan materials, make certain that these have all been returned. Librarians need the backing of teachers in teaching respect for materials and the rights of future borrowers.

Your term-paper assignment can be considered successful if your students have learned something about independent reference work, the resources of the library, and the organization and presentation of materials. And you will have discovered that your librarian, in school or public library, can actually help you teach. Her knowledge of materials and her efforts to help students will reinforce and complement your own—but only if you let her know what you are doing.



Theories of Promotion

How do we control and guide our children's progress through the secondary schools? There really is no clearly defined philosophy. . . . If we look at our recent past we see evidence of three policies:

1. A continuous progress policy which arranges for promotion on the basis of chronological age. This philosophy accepts the theory that there are individual differences among pupils; that different pupils will learn at different rates; and that most efficient learning develops as pupils progress through the grades at regular intervals.
2. Another philosophy of promotion provides for fixed and established standards with promotion and progress based on pre-set levels of achievement. This results in a system of "cut-off points" which stops progress of pupils through grades and levels of a school system

at the highest achievement points which given pupils can reach.

3. The third theory is based on a guidance-promotion policy which arranges for promotion from grade to grade and level to level on the basis of what appears to be best for the individual pupil. In some cases this may include some retardation. This policy is predicated on the assumption that teachers know enough about the learning process, the needs and abilities of pupils, the interpretation of test results, and the effect of promotion or retardation on individuals to make wise decisions as to their pupils' progress through the grades.

It is the last theory which we think is most consistent with our concerns for American youth.—MAURICE WOLLIN in *Intercom*.

EVENTS AND OPINIONS

BEATING THE SYSTEM: Sandwiched in between two provocative articles, "Are You a Beat?" and "What Boys Like to Eat," *Seventeen* discusses the currently popular educational topic, cheating. The question is asked: Who is to blame? The teacher? Parents? Society? College pressures? . . . or You?

Various stock answers are offered by several teen-agers. The test is unfair; you have to help your friend; you see other kids do it. And so it goes on. True-life experiences are recounted, depicting various circumstances which cause students to take their first plunge behind the shady curtain of dishonesty. Finally, a stalwart West Point candidate states, "It [cheating] is never justified. Your work should be a record of what you can do, whether it's homework or a test, a term paper—it doesn't matter. Cheating is cheating." And once again our heart skips a beat for those who compose the "straight gray line."

However, the essence of this article is the collection of preventives offered by high-school students and high-school educators. The students suggest the following methods and ideas for combatting cheating: (1) Bring the entire matter out in the open; discuss it in the newspaper, home rooms, and club meetings; initiate student council action. (2) Investigate the possibility of an honor system. (3) Start a student-run tutoring service. (4) Try to treat each teacher as a person, to remember that some are good and some are not—as in everything. (5) Make up your mind that what you learn, in the end, is up to you.

Now, what can the teacher do to prevent cheating? Here are some suggestions from high-school educators: (1) Cut down the temptation to cheat; proctor conscientiously; make up different tests for separate sections; eliminate the practice of having students exchange and correct one

another's test papers. (2) Ease exam pressures by testing frequently; give essay as well as objective tests to insure fair evaluation; broaden the base for determining final grades. (3) Step up school guidance programs to publicize and inform students of the wealth of accredited, uncrowded, often little known colleges. (4) Work with parents' committees to increase the understanding of the effects of parental pressures. (5) Experiment with different methods of testing that have helped reduce tensions (and cheating) in some high schools. Try the open-book exam, or the unmarked test (teacher records the grade in her book, while the student receives a check mark; private consultations are held with students who are failing), or the method-as-well-as-answer type of test. (6) Make up your mind that you're not always going to win. Keep trying.

The keynote is *keep trying*. That is the least a teacher can do.

ON THE DECLINE: Mankind is getting too smart for its own good, according to Professor Kenneth Boulding, who teaches economics at the University of Michigan. As he sees it, the great days of civilization are past, and we are already entering what he calls "post-civilization." The era of the civilized world began about 3,000 B.C., according to Boulding's timetable, when man learned to tame animals and operate farms. This developed a food surplus; no longer was it necessary for everyone to concentrate on his food gathering. With about three-quarters of the population occupied in producing food, the remainder could build cities, write books, and erect monuments to culture. "Yet it was that small percentage of the population that was available to fight the wars which destroyed cities and monuments," he

comments wryly. Harsh as the system was, it maintained a balance between man and nature.

The "post-civilization" age began about 1700 A.D. and will continue for several centuries, in Boulding's opinion. In the last 260 years man's knowledge and technology have made it possible to produce all the food we need with only 10 per cent of the population working farms—soon to be reduced to 5 per cent. That leaves the bulk of the people free to produce luxuries—and to fight ever more complex wars. "Even though nobody has quite reached post-civilization yet, we have an inkling of what post-civilized society, which is the end product of present development, would be like," the professor said. Its most striking characteristic would be a socialistic leavening. Luxuries would be available to both the rich and the poor, so that the prestige of high income would decline to the vanishing point.

And this comprises our disquieting thought for the new year.

FOR AN INFORMED PUBLIC: Superintendents of schools generally submit annual reports to their boards of education which summarize the growth and development of particular school systems for a given period of time. Often, these reports are cold recitations of statistical information which invariably find permanent residence in some forgotten file. Therefore, we found it a refreshing experience to receive the annual report issued by Harold S. Vincent, superintendent of the Milwaukee public schools.

Here is something different. The report is published in the form of a rotogravure section which was included in a Sunday edition of Milwaukee's two metropolitan newspapers. Some 354,000 copies of the report were distributed at a unit cost of 3.33 cents each. Perhaps Superintendent Vincent may be in a position to furnish a copy if you request one.

IN THE NAME OF RESEARCH: The worm, but not just any old worm, may give us some clues to the laws and principles of the learning process. At least, Dr. Edward S. Halas of the University of North Dakota is going to spend some \$18,000 put up by the Institute of Mental Health teaching worms—Planaria worms to be exact. These worms are believed to be the most primitive living beings on earth that have true nervous systems and the ability to learn.

By the use of lights and electric shocks, Dr. Halas intends to condition the worms to swim away from the light. This feat, if accomplished, may contribute toward the isolation of certain laws of learning as they apply to human beings.

This reminds us of the timeworn cartoon which depicts an irate wife bashing a rolling pin over the head of her all-night, carousing husband and uttering the contemptible epithet, "You worm!" Doesn't she realize he was out "learning"?

THE HIGH COST OF LOBBYING: The federal Regulation of Lobbying Act of 1946 requires all pressure groups to tell Congress at the end of each calendar quarter how much they spent to influence legislation.

According to the *Congressional Quarterly*, it appears that the biggest lobby spending in Washington during last year backed legislation which died in the House Rules Committee. More than \$77,000 were spent by the National Education Association in an effort to get a school-aid bill through Congress. The investment did not pay off this time.

Whatever consolation this may be, the National Education Association was one of 255 groups who spent \$1,800,000 during the first half of 1960 for the passing of particular pieces of legislation.

When the N.E.A. states that it actively works for its 700,000 teachers and school administrators, it really means it.

JOSEPH GREEN

The Communist Challenge

By HARTWELL A. KAYLER

ALTHOUGH COMMUNISM IS GENERALLY RECOGNIZED as civilization's greatest threat, educators everywhere show a reluctance to study it. This reluctance apparently stems from a belief that the study of communism will lead to the conversion of students to that way of life. Perhaps some fear adverse criticism of school patrons.

However, in recent months an increasing number of educational associations and school boards have passed resolutions urging educational institutions to include the study of communism in their curriculums. They have recognized the folly of playing a game without first scouting the opponent. It was for this purpose that a study guide was prepared for use in the public high schools in Indianapolis.

Several significant points confronted us as we prepared the unit. First, we felt that it was vitally important for every student

to know about communism because very few people are well informed on the subject. Second, we felt that it was difficult to get the facts about communism because the Communists themselves make it difficult. A third difficulty is our hatred of communism. Our emotions cloud the objective consideration of the subject.

A special subcommittee drafted the following unit objectives:

1. To develop understandings of:
 - (a) The history of communism and the conditions which gave rise to modern communism
 - (b) The Russian people: their history, resources, accomplishments, and problems to 1917
 - (c) The aims, leaders, structure, activities, weaknesses, and strengths of the world communist organization
 - (d) The political, social, and economic organization evolving in the Soviet Union since 1917
 - (e) The Communist Party as an instrument of the Soviet government
 - (f) The most effective means for repulsing the communist threat both nationally and internationally
2. To develop loyalty to democratic ideals and values
3. To build confidence in and respect for the American political, social, and economic institutions
4. To inspire students to a higher sense of economic, social, and civic responsibility to our community, state, and nation

The following is a condensation of the curriculum outline:

A. Definition of communism

1. Background
2. Communism today
3. Living under communism

EDITOR'S NOTE

In 1958 the heads of the social studies departments in Indianapolis high schools proposed an appraisal of teaching about communism and an evaluation of the need for expanding instruction on this topic. Was it desirable to conduct a systematic study of facts about Russia, world communism, and the role of the Communist Party in Soviet government? Their answer was "Yes."

The article describes how the proposal has become a reality. The unit as now taught in Indianapolis high schools comprises an intensive two-week assignment.

The author, who is one of the first to teach a unit on the communist system, is head of the social studies department at Thomas Carr Howe High School in Indianapolis.

- B. Communism and liberty
 - 1. Autocratic tradition
 - 2. Liberties lost under communism
- C. Communism and people's ideas
 - 1. Leadership
 - 2. Education of "new Soviet man"
 - 3. Control over media of information, arts, and sciences
 - 4. Survival of "new Soviet man"
- D. Communist party operation
 - 1. One-party system
 - 2. Party organization
 - 3. Procedures for decision making
- E. Communist rise to power
 - 1. Lenin's preparation
 - 2. Methods for carrying out the revolution
 - 3. Uprising of workers and its results (1905)
 - 4. Cause of World War I according to Lenin
 - 5. Lenin's strategy of changing imperialist war into civil war
 - 6. Lenin's deal with Germany
 - 7. The two Russian revolutions of 1917
- F. How communists stay in power
 - 1. Terrorism—key weapon of Communists
 - 2. The Cheka
 - 3. The purge
- G. Communism and economic life
 - 1. State ownership and operation of all means of production and distribution
 - 2. Lenin's "new economic policy"
 - 3. Stalin's halting of partial return to free enterprise
 - 4. Communist chain of command
 - 5. Collective farms
 - 6. Results of the five-year plans
 - 7. Standard of living
 - 8. Effects of planning on liberty
 - 9. Status of labor and labor unions
 - 10. Workers' rewards
 - 11. Status of public housing and social insurance
 - 12. Tensions and satisfactions
- H. International communism
 - 1. Lenin's blueprint for world conquest
 - 2. Agitation in backward and colonial countries
 - 3. Establishment of communist parties in many countries
 - a. Comintern
 - b. Methods of expansion
 - 4. Threat of Soviet political and economic imperialism
- I. Role of the United States in meeting the communist challenge.

The results of teaching this unit have been most gratifying. The students were intensely interested in the material. Their penetrating questions indicated a desire to know more about this enemy that has influenced and will continue to influence their lives in the future.

Many students read J. Edgar Hoover's *Masters of Deceit*, Whittaker Chambers' *Witness*, and Louis F. Budenz' *Techniques of Communism*. Many reports of individuals having personal contact with the Communists are read. In addition students read many booklets, editorials and newspaper articles.

The teachers of the anticommunism unit have noted with pleasure the increasing interest of the general public in the communist threat. There is evidenced an awareness for preparing youth and adults to meet this threat. Perhaps Shakespeare best expressed it in the words of Brutus when he said to Cassius:

There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.

The All-Important Fundamentals

By GRAYCE FOLEY SALERNO

A PERSISTENT PROBLEM in the teaching of the English language fundamentals is the search to identify the needs of the students and to meet these needs through a planned, yet flexible, course of study. The English department at South Side High School in Newark, New Jersey, set to work on a campaign to stress the teaching of minimum language essentials for each grade level. In line with the recommendation made by the English chairmen in the city schools, it was agreed that two-thirds of the time in the English classroom should be devoted to the study of the mechanics of the language—writing, grammar essentials, spelling, and dictionary work.

As the first step in this program, all English classes were assigned a composition which was to be written in class under the teacher's supervision. These lessons were graded as usual by the teachers and submitted to the English department chairman. For each set of papers, the teacher was requested to make a comment sheet indicating the most common errors and the most serious problems to be worked on by a particular class. In the analysis of these student compositions, the chairman found that errors on each grade level could be tabulated under the following types: grammar

essentials, sentence errors, punctuation, usage, and spelling.

A brief outline of some of the findings for each year of study follows.

FRESHMAN

Grammar Essentials

Verb tenses

Sentence Errors

Short, babyish sentences

Lack of unity of ideas

Incoherence

Punctuation

Use of the comma

Usage

Ambiguous words

Overuse of *and* and its repeated use as a sentence beginning

Spelling

(This is the most serious problem.)

SOPHOMORE

Grammar Essentials

Use of *like* and *as*

Verb tenses

Verb endings

Agreement of subject and verb

Sentence Errors

Incomplete and run-on sentences

Short, choppy sentences

Incoherence

Repetition

Punctuation

Comma usage

End of sentence punctuation

Capitalization

Usage

Wrong word choices

Inconsistent use of the third person

Spelling

(This is still a major problem that requires constant work and persistent follow-up.)

EDITOR'S NOTE

This article is a report by the English department of South Side High School, Newark, New Jersey, where the author is head of department. The report deals with the problem of improving the use of written and spoken English by students in the school. It includes a survey of most frequently found errors and also a course-of-study supplement on "Minimum Language Essentials."

JUNIOR

Grammar Essentials

- Poor sense of paragraphing
- Sense switching
- Agreement of subject and predicate

Sentence Errors

- Awkward construction of compound and complex sentences
- Run-on sentences
- Fragments
- Lack of variety

Punctuation

- Use of colon
- Incorrect use of capital letters
- Comma—in compound sentence; after introductory words and phrases; parenthetical expressions
- Failure to punctuate simple sentences
- Apostrophe for possessives

Usage

- Word choices—vague and inappropriate

Spelling

- Careless errors persist.

SENIOR

Grammar Essentials

- Pronoun antecedents
- Agreement of subject and verb
- Tense uniformity
- Paragraphing—failure to combine related ideas; inadequate development

Sentence Errors

- Awkward construction
- Incomplete sentences
- Run-on sentences

Punctuation

- Comma
- Semicolon
- Punctuation of subordinate clauses
- Rules for capitalization
- Introductory phrases and clauses

Usage

- Learning and placement of transitional words and phrases
- More specific language—vocabulary development

Spelling

- Possessives
- Plurals, especially numbers and letters

In the department consensus, it was revealed that there are certain needed techniques, habits, and skills that should be stressed on a cumulative plan throughout the four years of high-school training in English. These essentials are:

Proofreading
Clear thinking in writing
Organization of ideas through outlining
Learning to use transitional words and phrases
Emphasis on specific language through vocabulary development
More confident and creative expression

On the basis of the identification of student language needs and a department discussion meeting, a tentative guide for the teaching of minimum language essentials was formulated for immediate use. A sample of the guide for the sophomore year is given below.

MINIMUM LANGUAGE ESSENTIALS

Sophomore Level

GRAMMAR ESSENTIALS

Typical Weaknesses Reflected in Student Writing on the Sophomore Level:

- Use of *like* and *as*
- Verb tenses and endings
- Agreement of subject and predicate

*Review of Freshman-Year Grammar Requirements**Elements to be Stressed on the Sophomore Level:*

- Analysis of parts of the simple sentence
- Compound and complex sentences
- Methods of subordinating clauses
- Pronouns
- Kinds and uses
- Agreement with antecedent
- Punctuation of compound and complex sentences
- Eight parts of speech and uses in sentences
- Verb tenses

COMPOSITION

Work on the Elimination of Common Student Errors

- Coherence within a sentence
- Building effective sentences; avoiding repetition of words
- Usage—poor word choices; inconsistent use of tense and person
- Short, choppy sentences

Composition Units

- Business letter—mastery of form; write at least two letters

Short, informal essay writing based on personal experiences and literature studied—at least two compositions a cycle (marking period)

PUNCTUATION

Understanding of reasons for using the comma
Stress complete punctuation within and at the end of sentences
Review capitalization

DICTIONARY AND VOCABULARY WORK

Class practice in learning to find words rapidly and to understand definitions and pronunciation
Use dictionary games and lessons
Understanding of guide words on each page
Locating synonyms and antonyms
Vocabulary work from literature read during the term and from student book reports—add at the rate of one word a day

SPELLING

Formulate list from student compositions
Follow list in *Refresher Speller* (text for teachers)
Drill on list of spelling demons (a list of common student errors)

Since the survey of student language difficulties revealed a repetition of similar errors each year, the department suggested that a test for mastery of minimum essentials be given at regular intervals as part of the students' examination marks. It is hoped that this periodic survey test will help to emphasize the need for a serious mastery of these fundamentals on the part of the students. In addition, the department test may furnish an index of successful progress as well as persistent problems for more intensive department study.

This emphasis on the teaching of English fundamentals should be made periodically by every secondary-school English depart-

ment. With such a groundwork of facts and recommendations for the course of study, the process of revision and modification continues as each teacher works with his particular classes. The object is not to try to perfect a course of study or to standardize it on paper. The functional approach, with a concentration upon student errors, needs, and problems, must be accepted as the true measuring rod by which learning progress may be recognized and increased.

This plan implies that a great adaptation must be made of the tools of learning—texts and workbooks, audio-visual materials, daily and routine assignments, and unit projects. Such work may be accomplished best through the co-operative teamwork and consensus of an alert and conscientious department that recognizes the value of shared and pooled information on noteworthy techniques of developing language skills.

Time should be provided in department meetings for bull sessions on problems that arise as applications of the course of study are made in the classroom. Demonstration lessons within the department may be a valuable in-service training for teachers as they experiment with newer ways to solve some rather persistent learning problems. Discussions of procedures in other schools, as noted in current literature and as observed by teacher visitations, are valuable aids in the search for better teaching-learning situations. Thus meaningful co-operation, as reflected in a spirit of group effort, is essential to the success of any plan to improve the fundamental language skills of pupils within a school.



Some educators understandably fear that automation will replace the teacher. While it is true that automation may replace a poor teacher, any teacher who can be replaced by a machine certainly deserves to be replaced. Fortunately, American schools have a plethora of teachers who could not possibly be replaced by machines. With automated teaching devices, these teachers can make their most constructive contributions to education by utilizing their time in that for which their training, knowledge, and talent best equip them. Teachers can spend their working day engaged in constructive, efficient educational activity.—LEWIS D. EIGEN and P. KENNETH KOMOSKI in *California Journal of Secondary Education*.

Why Argue About MERIT RATING?

By
J. M. LYNCH

THE QUESTION OF TEACHER merit rating is still very much in the air in teachers' association meetings, administrators' conventions, school board association workshops, professional journals, and the press. Some hold that, regardless of how we think or feel, teacher merit rating is *here*. Others are equally insistent that, from the point of view of the procedures employed, teacher merit rating is not *all there*. As one reviews the pros and cons of the discussion, it becomes apparent that many of the participants in the current controversies are not talking about the same thing—the term “merit rating” seems to have a variety of meanings.

Typical of the viewpoint of the pro-rating exponents is the contention that

rating is a process that cannot be avoided—teachers, they claim, now are, and always have been, rated. Pupils, they point out, always compare teachers with one another—invariably, they judge the teacher they now have as “better than” or “worse than” the teacher they had previously. This is merit rating. Parents, too—from chance remarks made by their children, from conversation with neighbors, and from contacts made with teachers in the supermarket or in P.T.A. meetings—cannot help but arrive at evaluations of teaching effectiveness. This is merit rating. Letters of recommendation—written by principals, superintendents, or fellow teachers, for teacher placement bureaus or for other school systems—necessarily involve decisions about teaching ability. This is merit rating.

Employed in such a manner, the term “rating” means “forming an opinion about the quality of.”

Even though this way of regarding rating is a fact, it has, in actual practice, no connection with the salary paid the teacher. Most school systems operate with salary schedules which determine rate of pay according to number of years of education and number of years of teaching experience. Increments are granted annually upon recommendation of the principal and the superintendent. In some cases, increments may be withheld pending teacher improvement, which, if not forthcoming, may result in separation from the system.

By and large, teachers defend the salary schedule plan—based on years of training and years of experience—and are vehemently opposed to the various schemes that

EDITOR'S NOTE

Well sir, we had just about decided to publish no more articles on merit rating of teachers when along came this manuscript. We read it and agreed that it had a different twist. It's true that many people are prejudiced about merit rating but, if you are one that has yet an open mind, maybe you'll read through the article to find out how little prejudice you have. In all truth, let us announce that unless some author has an outstanding manuscript, we would be happy if no more writers wrote to CH about merit rating for teachers. As far as we are concerned, this can be the finale. The writer of the "finale" is supervisor of student teachers in secondary education, Monmouth College, West Long Branch, New Jersey.

are proposed under the label "rating plan." They do not regard procedures which determine, to a large degree automatically, the beginning salary, the amount and number of increments, and the maximum salary that a teacher will receive, as *rating* procedures.

Proponents of merit-rating-for-pay purposes, on the other hand, hold that the salary schedule plan, too, is a rating plan. From their viewpoint—no matter what the method used—re-employment for the ensuing year, the granting of tenure, or the payment of any increment whatever, constitutes merit rating. There is no escape from the fact that, in one way or another, judgments, appraisals, and evaluations must be made.

However, they do agree that teachers are in most instances rated inadequately. A great many of the methods of judging teaching ability in use today are on a par with the practices of appraising intelligence—on the basis of general appearance, expression of the eyes, and shape of the head—which were common before the advent of Benet's standardized tests. What is needed is a more nearly accurate appraisal of teaching effectiveness, a more objective procedure, a more scientific measurement technique.

Here, the emphasis is upon the *amount* of teaching ability. The term "rating" means "determining the *quantity* of."

It is in harmony with this interpretation that the use of rating scales is advocated—to identify, with greater exactitude of meaning, such qualities as "superior," "excellent," and "satisfactory," by reducing them to quantitative terms. It is about this interpretation, too, that much of the opposition to merit rating on the part of teachers builds up—often with strong emotional overtures.

Teachers, supervisors, and administrators object to the weight that is attached to the results obtained by means of rating scales on the ground that, up to the present time, no satisfactory devices or procedures have

been developed which can be used with much confidence to measure differences in the quality of teaching in terms of dollars and cents. Personnel workers and counselors admit that rating scales are the least perfected of any of their instruments. Even though authorities in the field of educational measurement and evaluation are confident that differences in teaching competence can be measured, they do not claim that the tools to do the job have been found.

Measurement requires reference to a standard—like the inch or the pound or the hour. Quantity is determined by comparison with the standard. While the primary function of the rating scale is to eliminate the elements of bias and the preferences of the individual rater, there are, in the field of education, a great variety of concepts of good teaching. It is possible, for example, for a teacher to be rated "superior" by a follower of the Dewey school of educational thought, and "not satisfactory" by a supporter of Dr. Bagley's Essentialist platform—even with the same rating scale. Without a standard as to what constitutes good teaching, a rater's estimate of a teacher's worth is subject to serious error. Since there is no general agreement concerning the nature of good teaching, it is hardly fair to consider any of the existing rating scales as measures of teaching ability.

Educational psychologists, whose province is to study and construct measuring instruments, warn us that measuring instruments must be reliable and valid. They have also called attention to the fact that not so much progress has been made in the measurement of complex, elusive, and intangible patterns of behavior—such as teaching ability—as in the measurement of motor ability, mental ability, and educational achievement. Available measures in the field of subtle personal traits have not yet reached the point at which they may be applied in the field of practice—rather, they are now in the stage at which all that can

be said is that they give hope of development *in the future*. As Henry Chauncey states, in his annual report (1955-1956) to the board of trustees of the Educational Testing Service, "If we can devise ways of achieving consistency among the judgments of different observers of such complex patterns of behavior, we may well find it possible to improve substantially on objective tests for the measurement of elusive and subtle personal traits."

An examination of the various adverse criticisms of merit rating reveals a worry about the devices or procedures employed. If a teacher were to receive notice that on a certain day and at a certain time, his height or weight or blood pressure were to be measured, or he were to be given a chest X ray, the chances are that he would be

little disturbed. If, on the other hand, a teacher were notified that on a certain day at a certain time, his personality or teaching competence were to be evaluated, the chances are that he would be greatly upset by this news.

Actually, the debate centers around the question of the means of measurement. The few instruments that we now have in the field of teaching-ability measurement are of significance only for further research. In this field as in other scientific areas, there is no substitute for experimentation. Rating for salary purposes by means of rating scales needs to be studied more fully. Until much more careful experimental investigation is carried on, the rating-scale technique remains an inadequate measuring device and the source of unending argument.



Hire Education

By DONALD S. KLOPP
San Gabriel, California

Most mystic phrase in days of yore,
Dear Higher Education,
So elevating, Dad sat wrapped
In starry contemplation—

In dreams, his Son would scale to heights
Rare, astronomically,
At least consort with Grecian Gods
Above Olympic valley.

Though higher, higher flew his thoughts,
Dad's back on firma terra
Since Junior (aging Frosh) has proved
The Old Man's dream in error:

Again tuition raise? Hike fees?
Dad's ego, in deflation,
Has learned at last just why they call
It Higher Education.

High-School Achievement in English

By BROTHER EDWARD PATRICK, F.S.C.

A STUDENT FINISHING HIGH SCHOOL should know that speaking and writing English is an acquired skill; that anyone with intelligence can learn how to speak, listen, and write well enough to make his contribution to our democracy; that a person ought to cherish the language and be as sensitive about it as he is about his manners.

When he comes to college, he ought to know what a sentence is, how it is formed, when it is a complete utterance and when it is a fragment, and how to punctuate his own writing. He should be able to identify a run-on sentence, the comma fault, a dangling modifier, and the fragment and should know how to correct these egregious errors. He ought to know how to avoid such errors, and when he uses the fragment, as on occasion he may do in good writing, he ought to know what he is doing and why.

A freshman should be accustomed to referring to the dictionary to check spelling, syllabication, and meanings, and he ought to know how to use the thesaurus intelligently. He should know when he is writing in the third person and ought to do this sort of thing often.

EDITOR'S NOTE

It is important to underline that the author represents a "college point of view." Furthermore, he must be a perfectionist if he expects all his specifications to be met. Frankly, we are publishing this statement because we think it is in many respects a "shocker." It isn't the kind of analysis we would write. Furthermore, we ask our readers to remember that the policy of The Clearing House is to publish articles even though the Editorial Board does not agree with the article's content.

The author is chairman of the department of English, La Salle College, Philadelphia.

The entering freshman should be able to read the explicit statement and understand it. He ought to have some notion about the implication of a statement and should be able to make valid inferences from what he reads. In fiction, he should be able to read a story intelligently and paraphrase it, identify the main character, and discuss what he thinks the theme of the story is. In a paragraph of exposition, he should be able to get the central thought and put that thought into his own language. To indicate his sharp reading ability, he ought to be able to make a précis of an article of 1,000 words.

In composition, the freshman should be able to write with sincerity and clearness a paragraph that sets forth his honest and carefully thought-out views about something worth while. He should then be able to revise this piece of writing, tightening his sentences, eliminating the needless words, cutting out the trite expressions; and he should be eager to do this sort of revising.

When in high school, he should have written at least eighty original papers in general composition and revised all of them. In literature, he should be able to identify the twenty big names in both English and American writing and place these writers in their proper place in history. He ought to be able to read a simple lyric or narrative poem and decide on the emotion it evokes. He should be able to appreciate figurative language and should have read at least a dozen of the novels that are usually assigned to senior-high-school classes.

A student must get rid of his stage fright and self-consciousness by speaking before his fellows at least once or twice a month during his school days. In addition to having this speaking ability, he ought to be trained to listen intelligently to speakers, his instructors, television programs, and radio broadcasts. People today must train

themselves to follow with a working mind the words and context of a speaker; they must keep their hearing alerted to note not only the words used by the speaker but also the inflectional tones. Students should have opportunities to listen to a recording of their own voices and take notice of the manner with which they indicate ideas, feelings, and the ending of their utterances. Oral reading will help them.

Finally, students should be eager to test their abilities in reading closely and to the point, and they ought to prepare themselves with the intention of taking the College Entrance Board examinations. The sooner high-school boys and girls learn that in adult life they will be subjected to frequent tests and examinations to procure choice employment, the sooner will they be ready for such eventualities. Almost everybody has to learn to be an employee, and one of the things to which employees are subjected is tests and measurements. Hence a high school should help motivate college-bound students, as well as the others, by conditioning them for such living. A good school teaches and tests and teaches again, and stu-

dents soon learn that tests and examinations are meant for their advantage, their help and improvement, their understanding of their own powers and knowledge and inadequacies. A person who knows what he can do and knows also how to get knowledge when he doesn't have it at hand is a person who is on the road to self-education, to continuing education, and that is one of the goals of all schooling.

Most high-school students do not get much pleasure out of the experience of learning, for they amass so little commensurate with the time allotted for school and college life. A tremendous enjoyment accrues to a person when he finds that he has a strong, workable mind, and that he can use this noble instrument to give himself knowledge, which spurs his confidence. The superb people in the world can do things because they know, and their knowledge produces courage, incentive, unstoppable drive, and unusual enjoyment. They have excellent motivation, but, unfortunately, their number is small. It is the business of all schools, from colleges on down, to make this number large.



Standardized Curriculums

In keeping with popular opinion, several schools have introduced standards requiring all students to take more courses in science, mathematics, and foreign language in order to graduate. These schools are sincere in their efforts, but they fail to realize that they may not be raising the general standards of learning whatsoever.

It certainly is not wise for every student in high school to study, for instance, four years of science, if he lacks the ability to study science or does not intend to specialize in science at more advanced levels. In fact, a requirement of this sort is likely to do damage to many individuals.

Whenever possible we want high-school students to have an opportunity to study subjects suited to their capabilities, interests, and needs. We don't want to force them, merely for graduation requirements, to spend their time studying subjects that won't be of any benefit to them. If they are forced

to take impractical courses or courses which they can carry only with great difficulty, they are likely to become completely frustrated.

In my judgment, it is unwise for a high-school student with no inclination toward mathematics to be forced to take four years of mathematics merely because he plans to go to college. He will be much better off if he is allowed to explore . . . other areas in which he may be interested.

The high-school curriculum should be adjusted to students, not students to the curriculum. Merely changing the curriculum because we want more engineers and technicians is no guarantee that we'll have more engineers and technicians. To be sure, the curriculum should provide ample courses for students capable of becoming engineers and technicians, but this does not mean that all students in high school should be forced to take these same courses.—J. B. TULASIEWICZ in *Education*.

Up and Down Is Vertical

By HELEN E. PFEIFER

"INCOMPREHENSIBILITY!" if I may borrow an idea from Humpty Dumpty. "Incomprehensibility! That's what I say."

If, like Alice, you want to know what I mean by that, I mean, "Up and down is vertical, and why, in the name of all the lexicographers of the universe, don't we say so if that's what we mean?"

This outburst was triggered by the direction given on a seventh-grade English final examination at our junior high school: "Draw an up and down line between the subject and the predicate." When I protested that up and down was vertical, I was informed coolly that that was the terminology the workbook used.

I know that when I meet some of these same seventh graders two years later in a Latin class, they will be amazed and confounded to find that the *vertebrates* they have trouble with in science, the *subversive* activities they are supposed to understand in social studies, and the *reverse* play that won the football game are all one with the vertical line that was supposedly too hard to learn in English class.

At a teachers' meeting shortly before this examination, our guidance counselor had reported the results of a standard achievement test administered to the eighth grade. "Our school reflects the tendency reported

nationwide," she said, "in that our pupils are weak in general vocabulary." In the name of Webster, why wouldn't they be weak if even the English teachers aid and abet the meek-mouthed author who is afraid to cleave a subject and a predicate with a vertical line? Given time it will probably become in our normal elided English a big three-syllable word anyway, like "gozinto," the modern parlance for "divide."

I was further disturbed about this tendency to limit vocabulary to already known words by an article about Dr. Seuss, that uninhibited creator of *The Cat in the Hat*. His publishers, Dr. Seuss stated, furnished him with a list of basic words for children at certain age levels and informed him that he must allow his fabulous creatures to speak in no terms outside those limitations. Needless to say, there is an occasional linguistic slip. How fortunate that the slithy toves did gyre and gimble before the days of basic lists.

Who is responsible anyway for this notion that the current crop of youngsters is scared of polysyllabic words? A diminutive friend of mine used to delight in saying "Chattanooga Choo-choo" and "Popocatepetl" at the advanced age of two. "Cinemascope" and "hydromatic drive" are kindergarten language for the jet-propelled modern child. When "prestidigitator" appeared on a teen-age book club selection, it was widely publicized because everyone who knew it wanted to show that he was a wizard at words by saying it. Let me try to teach a seventh grader how to spell "believe" and "receive" correctly, and he will assure me that he can spell "antidisestablishmentarianism," and there is no stopping him from proving it by doing so at once.

When my Latin class prepared a radio script for the local station on "Why Study

EDITOR'S NOTE

Here is a short piece about words and the use students make of them. It has a freshness and clarity that attracted us. The author is a teacher of English and Latin at Tiffin Junior High School, Tiffin, Ohio. Now the secret is out. Did you ever find a good Latin teacher who wasn't fond of those exact words!

Latin" we deliberately put in some jaw-breaking Latin derivative-filled sentences. How they basked in the plaudits of their classmates as they casually tossed off "ubiquitous" and "pulchritudinous" as though they were mere bagatelles!

Children like the sound and the roll and the rhythm of what they term "big" words, so why are teachers and schools and publishers in alliance to destroy this natural nimbleness of tongue? Who is most guilty, or who began the attack I don't know, nor does it matter. The teacher is the one who can begin the counterattack.

For we teachers are chary of the technical term or the unusual word. Is a noun a noun? Not today; it is a naming word. Verbs are not verbs; they are action words. We take away; we do not subtract. There are telling and asking sentences instead of

declarative and interrogative ones. I have even heard it said—mind you, this is only hearsay—that the exclamation point is a ball and bat, and the apostrophe, may the saints preserve us, is a high comma. It is small wonder that by the time a child reaches high school he has been so conditioned by this adult avoidance of a categorical vocabulary that he trembles at the sight of anything over five letters and develops a paralyzing logophobia.

But you must speak on their level, did I hear someone say? Why? If you do, how are you going to enable them to climb to a higher level? Have you not heard the phrase: "A man's reach must exceed his grasp"? We can't stimulate a child's vocabulary by vitiating our own vocabulary. Teach above his head and watch him lift his head higher.



Take a Straw Vote

How do board members know what is really desired by the people in their communities? Are they influenced unduly by a vociferous but unrepresentative group? Actually, any resemblance between that mythical thing called the will of the majority, and the educational practices in our public schools is in some communities coincidental, except during the period immediately following a reform movement. Even then, the atmosphere is generally clouded by personalities to such an extent that real educational issues become buried by cliques.

Who then determines educational policy? Perhaps the best answer is certain individuals and groups within a community, but not necessarily the majority. The result is not a policy but a series of compromises or a continuous armistice entered into in order to keep peace in the family.

If we assume (and in a democracy, we must) that boards of education should follow majority opinion, how can school boards be sure they know what that opinion is?

One vehicle that may help board members on major decisions, at least, is the straw vote. Local newspapers can be asked to publish in coupon form

an agenda for each board meeting two weeks before it is held. Citizens could check their opinions on the major issues coming up for vote and mail the coupon to the board secretary for tabulation prior to the meeting.

It should be made clear to the public that this is not voting but opinion gathering, and in no way binding on board members. When the responses are light it may be the citizens' way of saying that they are satisfied with either direction the board takes. If, however, there is a heavily divided vote on a particular question it may be wise for the board to postpone a decision until more ground work is laid. Here would be an ideal place for citizens committees, parent-teacher associations, or other study groups to take over and discuss in more detail the implications of the issue involved. This should result in a clearer mandate at a future meeting.

The straw vote technique should not only take a great burden off board members but build greater community support of our schools and respect for our boards of education.—LEO W. JENKINS in *Overview*.

Strategy in the Guidance Program

By COLLINS W. BURNETT

THE GUIDANCE PROGRAM gets the nod as the first problem area for able students, because of the recent developments which have spotlighted guidance. Conant (1) pointed out in his famous survey, *The American High School Today*, that there should be one counselor for every two hundred fifty or three hundred students in the high school. He also stated that counselors should devote full time to guidance responsibilities. He made it clear that the concept of the comprehensive high school cannot succeed without a strong guidance emphasis. Here is the former president of Harvard University, famous scientist and highly respected statesman, telling us about the need for a high-level guidance program!

It is a safe guess that Conant's thinking influenced Congress to legislate the National Defense Education Act of 1958 which in the initial stage provided a total of \$21¼ million for Title V, "Guidance, Counseling, and Testing." Regardless of what we may think about federal financial support to public education, we have to admit that a

long-neglected area has received a strong push. Elbers (2, p. 12) commented,

Probably no more than half of our high school students have available to them the services of an adequate counseling program. With a shortage of about 15,000 counselors in the public high schools alone, in 1956 only about 2,500 graduate degrees were granted in counseling and student personnel work. Moreover, only about one-third of the 26,000 full-time and part-time counselors now in the high schools meet minimum State standards.

One measure of the price we pay for this deficiency is indicated by the fact that about 100,000 able high school students each year fail to go on to college because of lack of motivation. While a complex of factors lies behind such a waste of talent, one of the more important reasons is the lack of sound counseling and guidance programs in the schools to provide the means of identifying the able student and of encouraging him to make wise decisions on his future education and career.

Farwell and Vekich (3) in a study in 1956-57 of the 1,138 secondary schools in Ohio found that only 20 per cent of these schools had full-time guidance workers. Only 16 per cent of Ohio's schools met the counselor-pupil ratio of 1:500 and only 6 per cent of the schools had a ratio of 1:300. And Ohio ranks close to the top among all of our states in terms of industrial income!

Now what can be accomplished by educational strategy in the guidance program to enable us to work more effectively with able students?

First, the counselor by means of the testing and counseling programs can spearhead the school's effort in identifying superior and talented students. Classroom teachers also share in this responsibility, but teachers have many other responsibilities and for the most part do not have allotted time or the specialized skills and experiences in testing and counseling. In the identification of the able students, it is important to use a multiple criterion approach rather than a single criterion. There

EDITOR'S NOTE

This article was originally titled, "Problem Areas in Secondary Schools for Superior and Talented Students." It contained various topics of interest. However, we abstracted one portion concerned with the identification and guidance of superior students, for the author handles the guidance problem with considerable aplomb. The contributor reports that the article is based on a paper presented at a conference on the superior and talented student, held at Logan Senior High School, Logan, West Virginia. He is co-ordinator of student personnel, College of Education, The Ohio State University, Columbus.

is much that we do not know about identifying able youngsters, but we do know that a single criterion lacks validity and reliability. Superior and talented behavior includes many variables in a complex setting. The base for measuring this sort of behavior must be broad and comprehensive.

A combination of achievement and differential aptitude test batteries, personal inventory to get hunches about ambitions and interests, plus individual interviews, recommendations from teachers, and a profile of extraclass activities should be a worth-while package for identification purposes. In one study (5) dealing with superior college students, the following criteria were identified and validated: (1) upper third of high-school academic rank; (2) Ohio State Psychological Score between 80-100 percentiles; (3) high-school activities at the level of at least one major position of leadership and membership in at least three different organizations. A fourth criterion, which had to be discarded because of low statistical significance, was that of a strong recommendation from the high-school counselor, or principal, or teacher.

Second, the counselor cannot stop with the identification of the superior and talented student. He must set the stage with the help of all of the school and community resources for implementing his findings by challenging this group. In one instance, an eminent psychologist described a study of gifted children which was undertaken by a midwestern university a number of years ago. Great effort was made to identify these youngsters. No sound idea was overlooked. One high-school boy was identified as a brilliant mind with special ability in mathematics. The psychologist then related that in the follow-up study made several years later the researchers found this same young man working as a filling station attendant—and that is the end of the story! The question always remains: Why did not the researchers implement their knowledge of this bright boy to help him think about

college and a professional career in which he could have used his genius in mathematics?

The counselor can make use of his test data and other evidence which suggests high-level ability for a group of high-school youngsters by a combination group guidance and individual counseling. The counselor can explain the meaning of test scores on achievement and aptitude tests to the group so that they will understand how they compare with the rest of their peers and why the school is expecting greater productivity (not only in school marks but in leadership and creative ideas) from them than from the rest of their peers. At least one or two group discussions can deal with vocational careers as related to a college education. The student is helped to understand that he has a responsibility for getting to college so that he can make the outstanding contribution for which he has the potential. The group guidance sessions should be followed by individual counseling sessions so that the counselor can make sure that each youngster interprets the data about himself correctly.

It is probably true that many able students in high school never attain excellence or distinction and never get to college, because they never understand their own capabilities. The counselor can help create the image of superior and talented behavior, the person who is well organized and disciplined, who turns creative ideas into achievements, and whose quest for knowledge in order to solve problems is never ended. Somehow this image has to become a part of the conscious behavior of each of these outstanding boys and girls. Once he understands himself and his behavior, he begins to accept himself realistically. He sees himself as he really is. Somewhere in this developmental process of realizing a new image, drive or strong motivation enters the picture. Such a person has "caught fire." He is no longer referred to as potentially able. He is able. He is productive. He

spends twelve hours a day besieging his parents, teachers, and others with questions. He reads voraciously. The self-satisfaction of his achievements returns in some way to kick off new waves of creative thinking and more accomplishments.

The counselor can also help able students who have problems about vocational careers, have worries about some member of the family, lack opportunity to read what they like, need to improve their minds, and need a greater chance to enjoy art and music. Irvin (4) found that superior college students had more problems in ten of the eleven general areas of the Mooney Problem Check List than the nonsuperior group indicated. The difference between the two groups was not in frequency but rather in kind of problem.

The question of how the counselor should divide his time between different ability groups always comes up for discussion. Of course, the counselor is concerned with and interested in the welfare of all students in school. In terms of priority, he should work first of all with the top third; spend some time with the middle third; and if there is any time left, work with the bottom third. Some one may say that this preference arrangement is unfair or undemocratic to the students in the middle and lower thirds of the distribution. Under our present time allotment in many high schools, as well as colleges, students in the lower third of the population get preferential treatment and able students are almost, if not entirely, forgotten. The explanation of why we are so undemocratic with our best students is simple. The low-level student with all of his

problems is always pounding on someone's door for help. These students as a group take up so much time from counselors, teachers, and administrators that there is usually no time left for working with the group who potentially can accomplish so much in our society. Unless the counselor deliberately plans time to work with the able group, he will never have a chance to give them adequate consideration.

In some state universities where there is little selection at the time of admission, counselors spend more than half of their eight hours a day working with students who are about to be dismissed or who have already been dismissed. The academic dismissal does not end the process, because next quarter the student is back again to petition for reinstatement. Even though a student is dismissed once, twice, three, or four times he nearly always claims that on his constitutional rights he is entitled to another chance. He always knows that he will succeed next time.

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Any modification of compulsory education and youth labor regulations should, however, be accompanied by at least two other changes. In the first place, adult education should be developed to give a second chance at schooling for those who unwisely reject it during their later teens. But more important would be the beginning of a national scholarship program for gifted but financially needy high school pupils to enable them to continue their training through high school and perhaps through college. The educationally gifted hardly ever wish to quit school to go to work; the national welfare demands that their abilities not be wasted in routine or blind alley jobs.—H. C. BREARLEY in the *Tennessee Teacher*.

BOOK REVIEWS

Mental Health in Education by MERL E. BONNEY. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1960. 434 pages, \$5.95.

Some years ago the responsibility of teachers for the mental health of their pupils began to be emphasized. Since that time several books dealing with the topic of mental health have appeared. Professor Bonney's new book is an outstanding one in this area. Beginning with the basic assumption that the teacher is not a clinician, the text is written in a language for the teacher without sacrificing a scholarly treatment of mental health considerations.

The book is divided into six parts. The first discusses the general nature of mental health problems, specific kinds of problems encountered among pupils, the manifestations and causes of these problems. Maintaining a positive approach throughout, the second part deals with the objectives of mental health. The nature of adjustment in various frames of reference is explained with practical suggestions teachers may utilize to attain these objectives with their pupils. The third part explains how pupil adjustment may be measured through employment of anecdotal records, both teacher- and self-rating scales, projective self-expressive productions, and sociometric instruments. Classroom management involving grouping and group discussions and their effect upon mental health is dealt with in the fourth part. Part 5 is concerned with the social climate of the school—its causes and ramifications. The impact of social status groupings along with religious and ethnic factors upon the school's social climate and mental health is pointed out. Practical suggestions are mentioned for the elimination of discrimination against the lower-class or minority-group child. The last part concerns itself with the mental health of the teacher.

Each chapter is organized in such a way as to be of maximum benefit to the reader. In each case, the problem is discussed embodying any theoretical considerations appropriate. Representative research is presented and practical suggestions are indicated.

This new book is a readable, yet scholarly, production. It is a review of the research and, at the same time, it may be used as a manual for mental health in the classroom. In the opinion of this writer it will become one of the most well-known and respected in its field.

TRAVIS L. HAWK

Latin America: the Development of Its Civilization by HELEN MILLER BAILEY and ABRAHAM P. NASATIR. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960. 818 pages, \$7.95.

"Before Jamestown and the *Mayflower*, Spain had completed most of her full cycle of discovery, exploration, and settlement, and had transplanted her civilization, one of the richest cultures in Europe at the time." (p. 151). So the writers conclude the glorious story of Spain's first one hundred years in the New World. Thus they introduce the colonial period, which was to last more than two hundred years. The key to understanding Latin America today can be found in a careful reading of Part II, which is a particularly fine summary of New World Spanish, culture—political, religious, intellectual, commercial, and societal.

The nineteenth century is depicted as a series of smoldering fires and open revolt from Argentina to Cuba—with the U.S. getting actively into the struggles of the latter. There is considerable reference to the part played by the Monroe Doctrine in keeping Europeans out of the troubled situations of the struggling new nations. Our own recognition of relatively stable governments as they emerged under "strong men" made possible some growth toward responsible government.

How fortunate for the entire South American continent that Bolivar appeared when he did and that he fostered very early a movement toward Pan-Americanism. And that he was largely responsible on this continent for the creation of new national states.

This text attempts to bring a clear picture of the twentieth century developments in all countries in the latter third of the book. The contrast in growth, culture, and relative stability between the ABC powers and the other Latin American nations is a phenomenon of the present century.

In view of the present troubles in Cuba and not so long ago in Argentina, the careful student should not miss the danger of communist encroachment. Guatemala is a case in point; by 1953 the Communists had control of the press and held forty-six of the fifty-seven seats in the congress. Expropriation of land owned by American companies has been a result. To counteract this trend there is the Organization of American States. This body

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and its agencies constitute the one best hope, along with the United Nations, for peace in this hemisphere.

This is a good text, well written and illustrated, and should be excellent for reference or as a text for a semester in Latin American history.

HERBERT G. TAG

Children's Behavior by SOPHIE RITHOLZ.
New York: Bookman Associates, Inc.,
1959. 239 pages, \$5.00.

A new landmark in the objective study of children's behavior, this book continues research begun by E. K. Wickman in 1928 under the sponsorship of the Commonwealth Fund. On a rating scale ranging from personal problems of slight consequence to problems considered extremely grave, Wickman found, in his pioneering volume titled *Children's Behavior and Teachers' Attitudes*, that teachers were evaluating their children in moralistic terms. Thus teachers decried aggressive behavior and lack of interest in schoolwork, but they overlooked the importance of recessive or withdrawal symptoms.

Since 1928 the mental hygiene approach to teaching has helped teachers become increas-

ingly aware of home and school problems in the over-all personality development of their children. In the present work Miss Ritholz examines not only the attitudes of teachers but also those of parents, the children themselves, and mental hygienists (psychologists, psychiatrists, psychiatric social workers, and so on) having important encounters with the children.

Thus she has contributed an original, documented study, made possible by permission of the New York City Board of Education.

In the book's foreword, Dr. Elizabeth B. Hurlock emphasizes that this is the first investigation to reveal "the child's side of the story." Dr. Hurlock goes on to say that Ritholz' book "has emphasized what other studies of children have hinted at but have failed to prove conclusively, the relative importance of parents' and teachers' roles in determining the child's self-concept after he reaches the school age." Happily, the findings are not either-or dilemmas. To quote Miss Ritholz herself (p. 136): "For we find that there is nowhere the divergency of influence on the child that had been anticipated; that, on the contrary, the parents and teachers have shown themselves, by and large, to be truly protagonists and not the antagonists that newspaper

accounts and other Dresden tempests would have us sporadically believe them to be."

Although this is a book about essentially normal children, it is also a commentary on the problems of the delinquent and of the emotionally disturbed. Appendix B, representing pictorially the children's views regarding various kinds of behavior, is a most useful and interesting device. In general, boys regard misbehavior less seriously than girls. But the graphs also show that eighth-grade boys behave in a manner more in line with adult expectations. All findings are substantiated by statistics. However, summary and evaluative statements tie the material neatly together. This is a most readable piece of research.

LOUIS J. CANTONI

How to Tell the School Story by LESLIE W. KINDRED and others. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960. 376 pages, \$5.00.

This book is a very satisfactory attempt to give help and suggestions to those persons vitally concerned with the public-relations function of the schools. Here are more than 450 pages of excellent information prepared by a person who has studied, worked, and experimented in the field of public school relations. In this book Dr. Kindred, with the help of a group of able and experienced associates, gives scores of sound suggestions for positive and exacting approaches to telling the school story.

After answering the initial question, "Why Tell The School Story?" Dr. Kindred and his associates proceed with a discussion of planning the story. They then utilize the remainder of the book in presenting helpful approaches to the public relations aspect of the school and its program. No avenue for telling the story has been omitted as the authors deal with such media of communication as the press, radio and television, school exhibits, public speeches, direct parent contacts, public performances by the students, special campaigns, and many others. The book is well supplied with examples of practices tested in many school systems throughout the country and ideas are documented by research or effectiveness proved through practice.

This is a book which should be well used immediately in every school system earnestly attempting to tell the school story. It may certainly find its place in preservice college classes for teachers as well as graduate classes in school administration.

ERNEST H. CAMPBELL

Guidance Services (2d ed.) by J. ANTHONY HUMPHREYS, ARTHUR E. TRAXLER, and ROBERT D. NORTH. Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1960. 414 pages, \$4.50.

In the introduction to this book the authors make clear what the purposes and the dimensions of this volume are: "In this book the authors present basic concepts and procedures for guidance services at all educational levels—in elementary and secondary schools and in colleges and universities." The book is directed to students of education, faculty members who are potential counselors, and to leaders of youth in out-of-school activities. The breadth of approach and the scope attempted constitute one of the chief weaknesses of the book.

The volume is divided into five parts: (1) Understandings basic to guidance work, 118 pages. (2) Guidance tools and techniques, 119 pages. (3) Solving students' major problems, 119 pages. (4) Administration of the guidance program, 35 pages. (5) The future of guidance services, 11 pages.

As a book about guidance this is a simple conventional treatment. It is, on the whole, a sketchy book, but this perhaps is inevitable in dealing with as complex a field as guidance for so varied an audience, over such a wide range of educational institutions. This volume covers content which, in many university counselor education programs, is dealt with thoroughly in as many as four different courses. In this respect it may be classified with several other textbooks in guidance as following the "omnibus" approach to an introductory textbook. The result is a superficial treatment of some of the complex and controversial aspects of guidance. Let me cite a few examples:

The terminology of guidance services is dealt with as such in less than a page. However, throughout the book terminological problems keep cropping up. On page 14, for instance, among the listed guidance services is one called "counseling: interviewing and testing," and on page 16 reference is made to "counseling, including interviewing and testing."

On pages 107-108 a brief treatment of federal aid to guidance includes a statement to the effect that Part B of Title V of the N.D.E.A. provides money to "support the establishment of training institutions to improve the qualifications of persons" in guidance. If one accepts the usual meaning of "institutions," this is not correct.

In chapter 7 such devices as interest inventories are dealt with without reference to the

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faking problem. These inventories are so treated that the warning regarding misuse of them comes as a brief statement at the end of a much more lengthy discussion which treats them very kindly indeed.

Throughout the book the references to guidance in the elementary school seem to be inserts, the chief purpose of which is to use the words "elementary school." There is no systematic treatment of the important differences between guidance in the elementary and secondary schools. The illustrations are overwhelmingly taken from high-school and college settings.

There are more "goofs" than good editing should permit. Merl Ohlsen's name is misspelled on page thirteen, Percival Hutson's name is misspelled on page 357. On page six Roeber, Smith and Erickson are credited with copywriting a book in 1595! There are more!

This reviewer is of the opinion that a book such as this will prove of little value to the guidance practitioner who already knows something about his profession. To the audience addressed by the authors, the book will provide a sketchy, and at some points an inadequate, treatment of this important field. The book will neither inspire nor excite any one. There are

at least eight or ten introductory treatments of the field on the market that do a more thorough, readable, interesting, and scholarly job of introducing the beginner to the field of guidance.

GEORGE E. HILL

Improving the Quality of Public School Programs: Approaches to Curriculum Development by HAROLD J. McNALLY, A. HARRY PASSOW, and others. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1960. 331 pages, \$4.95.

According to statements both in the foreword and the preface, this book is a sequel to *Curriculum Improvement in Public School Systems* (1950) by Hollis L. Caswell. The present authors explain that "although we have completely rewritten the text, we have kept the essential concept and structure of the original book."

The book is organized into three major divisions. The first, "Approaches to Curriculum Development," provides a basic discussion of the demand for curriculum change, traces the historic development of the curriculum from Colonial days, outlines the better organizational

patterns and procedures for curriculum change which have evolved through extensive experience with curriculum revision programs. This section of four chapters, necessarily brief but compact, provides an excellent overview of the basic considerations essential to good curriculum revision procedures.

The second division, "Reports of Curriculum Programs," delineates in considerable detail the curriculum revision procedures employed in seven communities of widely different characteristics. The authors have shown the happy faculty of selecting excellent examples of the adaptation of sound curriculum revision procedures to different school-community situations.

The third section, "Appraising Curriculum Improvement Programs," sets up criteria for the evaluation of revision programs. It is one of the best organized and comprehensive statements of criteria in compact form this reviewer has seen.

This book should prove most useful to those presently engaged in or contemplating curriculum revision projects. It should be a valuable source of reference in professional courses concerned with contemporary procedural practices in effecting change in the school curriculum.

NELSON L. BOSSING

Who's Who Among Our Reviewers

Dr. Bossing is professor of education at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Dr. Campbell is co-ordinator of graduate studies, Chico State College, Chico, California.

Dr. Cantoni is associate professor of education and co-ordinator of the rehabilitation counselor-training program at Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. With his wife, Lucile, he has written a book, *Counseling Your Friends*, appearing in 1961 under the imprint of the William-Frederick Press, New York 55, New York.

Dr. Hawk is associate professor of educational psychology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Dr. Hill is professor of education and director of the guidance training laboratory at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio.

Dr. Tag is associate professor of education at the University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut.

Books Received

Business English Essentials (2d ed.) by GRETA LAFOLLETTE LARSON. New York: Gregg Publishing Division, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1959. 184 pages, \$2.00.

The Challenge of Democracy (4th ed.) by THEODORE P. BLAICH and JOSEPH C. BAUMGARTNER. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1960. 626 pages, \$5.95.

The Community Junior College by JAMES W. THORNTON, JR. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1960. 300 pages, \$5.95.

Educators Guide to Free Films (20th ed.) compiled and edited by MARY FOLEY HORKHEIMER and JOHN W. DIFFOR. Randolph, Wis.: Educators Progress Service, 1960. 639 pages, \$9.00.

Educators Guide to Free Filmstrips (12th ed.) compiled and edited by MARY FOLEY HORKHEIMER and JOHN W. DIFFOR. Randolph, Wis.: Educators Progress Service, 1960. 163 pages, \$6.00.

Effective Living (workbook) by LOIS SMITH MURRAY. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960. 294 pages, \$3.75.

Elementary Teachers Guide to Free Curriculum Materials (17th ed.) edited by PATRICIA H. SUTTLES. Randolph, Wis.: Educators Progress Service, 1960. 346 pages, \$7.50.

Essentials of Healthier Living by JUSTUS J. SCHIFFERES. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1960. 335 pages, \$5.50.

First Plays for Children by HELEN LOUISE MILLER. Boston: Plays, Inc., 1960. 295 pages, \$4.00.

German for Beginners by CHARLES DUFF and PAUL STAMFORD. New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1960. 359 pages, \$1.75.

Gregg Notehand (with Teacher's Guide) by LOUIS A. LESLIE, CHARLES E. ZOUBEK, and JAMES DEESE. New York: Gregg Publishing Division, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1960. 320 pages, \$4.48.

People to Remember adapted by GERTRUDE MODEROW. Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1960. 296 pages, \$2.40.

Physical Geography (2d ed.) by ARTHUR N. STRAHLER. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1960. 534 pages, \$7.50.

Policies for Science Education (Science Manpower Project Monograph) edited by FREDERICK L. FITZPATRICK. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1960. 219 pages, \$3.95.

The Statesman's Year-Book (1960-1961) edited by S. H. STEINBERG. New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1960. 1,677 pages, \$9.50.

THE HUMANITIES TODAY

TV & NEWER MEDIA

Fake Sounds and Folk Sounds

Rarely has the bifurcation in American popular culture been so neatly summarized as it was in two recent television song fests broadcast a week apart on the most and the least mature television networks. The C.B.S. network presented a production of its electronic renaissance man, Robert Herridge, "Folk Sound, U.S.A."; and A.B.C., where private eyes and public enemies roam at large, apotheosized teen-age fake sounds in an unrefreshingly long nonmusical pause sponsored by the Coca-Cola Company. The aural and visual juxtaposition of true vocal art with the most blatant prefabricated kitsch clarified the choices involved in having our musical culture dominated by show-business robber barons rather than imaginative and dedicated artists.

What the payola scandals never revealed, the A.B.C. teen-age special did: it matters more that the wholesome Pat Boones and Dick Clarks keep teen-agers from a truly satisfying musical heritage than that they make a lot of dough from their own music-publishing firms and pressing plants. It is less significant that the teen-agers and subteens get a bad deal on the \$50 million they spend for single records each year; the true larceny is that the tinsel curtain of blah raised by the wizards of the echo chamber separates nearly 16 million kids from the kind of art and leisure which it takes to make adults.

This is no academic quibbling; genuine maturity doesn't coexist with the fake substitutes for art that package producers like P & G have sponsored for a generation in soap opera, and that soft-drink makers support in their subliminal campaign to equate sociability with the cultivation of caries. The marketing strategies of the mass-volume, low-unit-cost manufacturers (with exceptions that prove the rule, like Purex sponsoring "The Sacco-Vanzetti Story") are committed to a philosophy that puts the profit picture of their individual corporations above any and all other considerations—the security of a country of befuddled entertainment addicts, the over-all programing balance of the dominant medium of our culture, the real growth of individuals captive in a teen-ager culture.

The "Coke Time" special provides a good insight into the dynamics of a teen-age culture, perhaps symbolized by the title of Dick Clark's book, *Your Happiest Years*, its basic assumption being that maturity is a necessary anticlimax. The TV program of "fake sounds, U.S.A." sketched out this Norman Rockwell image of fun. Pony-tailed innocents affecting their fathers' tail-dragging shirts; the stereotype (and implicitly pathetic loneliness) of the teen-ager forever on the telephone, looking for the kind of friendliness and perspective that his popular culture denies him; the dreamy irrelevance of the songs fixated on going steady (will we stop this madness when it gets back as far as kindergarten? it's back to junior high already), the terror of realizing that this program celebrating an adolescence of carefree innocence (despite the tacked on seriousness of the last few bars) is a concept of life also accepted by the adults who watch this program—half of Dick Clark's afternoon sessions in cultural amnesia are adults, using the term loosely.

One hears about the miracles performed by tape editors and echo-chamber masters on the tonsils of Fabian and Frankie Avalon, but one has to see them, eyes full of fear and amateur-night-stiff on camera, to realize how much these children have been had. One wonders what kind of an adult life such pseudo performers can live the day they are barred from the echo chambers. Annette Funicello, who was as charming as it is possible for a Mouseketeer to be, looked literally terrified as she tried to carry a tune with Frankie Avalon. In a taped montage of "hits" by the stars, where echo chamber prevailed, it was possible to separate the singers from the long-playing pinocchios. It is interesting to speculate on the wish fulfillment involved in taking such working-class children and making stars out of them. In the ugliness of working-class sections of our big cities, it is easy to identify with someone, who, but for the grace of R.C.A.-Victor goes I, easy to forget the cheapness and despair of actual life by dreaming through television and the network of fan magazines that feed on the same pseudo-art.

But the horror of the teen-agers' bargain with the show-business robber barons is fully apparent only when its emptiness is compared with the real article. Robert Herridge, though a kind of cultural polymath himself, is wise enough

to go to the best consulting talent to develop his specials. Nat Hentoff, who collaborated with Herridge on "The Sound of Jazz," the best single program on the subject so far on television and the only one to win a Newport Jazz Festival TV Award, was also the consultant for this program. What this means is that directors cannot take over with tricky exhibitionism, but must stick to a hierarchy which subordinates TV's resources to the hegemony of the musical form under consideration. Cisco Houston was the narrator, keying fluid transitions from singer to group to singer as the camera explored the wide and varied terrain of folk music. The Herridge tradition of spare, even austere, staging was doubly appropriate for a program of folk music. Two things distinguished the teen-ager's pseudo world from the fully dimensional cosmos of the folk singer: the comprehensiveness of emotional range and thematic content. There were songs about working, songs about living, and loving, and dying, chants about Whitman's America and chants about selling peanuts, songs of hope and despair.

And there was a magnificent display of unique personalities, a colorful spectrum of individuation that made the gray blurs of the teenage heroes all the more pitiful: John Lee Hooker, lips quivering in the honest laments of his feelings; John Jacob Niles, with a prophetic kind of intensity in both eye and tenor voice; Joan Baez, a teen-ager with voice and soul both beautifully her own; Cisco Houston, a roustabout sensibility. There is a certain logic after all to the gimmicks and gyrations of Teenland's pseudo artists: they must try to establish themselves by an external sign that hides their inner lack of grace. Ed "Kookie" Byrnes, as Jack Gould wryly observed, is the only performer that ever combed his way to stardom. His narcissistic gesture, so typical of today's teen-age obsession with surface, betrays an empty head. Just as the painfully arch hip talk between him, the "beatnik" of the Dobie Gillis Show, and Pat Boone (aging, unhip representative of that adult land known as Squaredom) is another example of the fake individuations of the teen-age kitsch makers. (Teen-agers can buy for 50 cents at their drugstores now a dictionary of hip Kookie talk.)

Nor should we be misled by Coca-Cola's shrewd merchandising campaign in the high schools, with its sloughing off an artistic problem by a phony genuflection to Culture. Hi-fi clubs have been formed in several hundred high schools to encourage talent in the popular arts.

The three winners—a painfully chopped up Chopin étude, a reasonably interesting soprano aria, and a synthetic version of the best-selling quartet—show how possible it is for fake popular art to coexist with genteel Culture, six days of noisy tripe followed by a hushed day of reverence. If Coke really wants youngsters to grow, rather than simply to hook them early by "being more sociable" than its competitor, it should distribute kinescopes of the Herridge program for high-school assemblies and give their English teachers free Folkways albums—to show the teen-agers what they're missing in their sticky little cotton candy cosmos.

For when you finally get down to it, the tragedy and waste of fake art is that it renders people "connable"—these poor innocent lambs believing they're living in the best of all possible worlds! (Don't their transistorized ears keep telling them they're on the right wave length?) And the measure of our respect for folk art is that it keeps little people wise in their own way, ready to spot and spurn the faker. We have Herridge to thank for making the case so clear.

PATRICK D. HAZARD
University of Pennsylvania

Invaders of Privacy

There was a time when a citizen of the United States could cherish his personal privacy or modesty without being labeled a spoilsport or prude. Of course, the person who maintains that he has a right to be let alone is considered suspect by the group since such an attitude nibbles at the core of the group's existence. Similarly, the one who deplores the vulgarity of many movies made under the relaxed code is regarded as a dangerous opponent to freedom of speech by some.

Thus—in this era of fishbowl-privacy—it is not altogether surprising to read in a Philadelphia newspaper the U.P.I. story about an elderly Cleveland Heights woman who was convicted of making 13,800 nuisance phone calls in recent years. Nor does one lift an eyebrow very far when he notes in *Editor and Publisher* that in Georgia a young man was captured who had asked women intimate questions over the telephone by posing as a survey worker for the Kinsey Foundation. And although the telephone was the devil's instrument in these two instances, television has also proved a handy chisel for rending man's dignity.

Now that the quiz shows have been purged from the networks, "credit" for shattering the

most privacy in a single hour must go to the hour late Sunday nights when C.B.S.'s "Candid Camera" is followed by N.B.C.'s "This Is Your Life."

Besides an irrepressible banality, these two programs have a number of characteristics in common. Both exploit nonprofessionals, thus leaving the member of the audience with the hope that maybe he, John Doe, can someday appear on this fun-filled half hour. Both employ an M.C. who uses a confiding approach to the audience. Arthur Godfrey and Ralph Edwards lead the viewers to believe that they have a few secrets in store for those who will stay to watch the proceedings. Both programs frequently drop plugs for products or services not provided by the sponsor.

The viewer who tunes in "Candid Camera" will soon find himself listening to the chortling of Mr. Godfrey although there seems to be nothing to laugh at. Thus the notion is conveyed that Mr. Godfrey has already seen the amusing films the viewer is about to witness, and that the mere *thought* of them sets him off. Seated in the middle of a set that is vaguely reminiscent of the one used by Alfred Hitchcock in the movie *Rope*, Mr. Godfrey soon introduces Allan Funt, a pudgy, brash fellow who for years has been concealing cameras and mikes near unsuspecting people, baiting them, and recording the results for presentation on radio, motion pictures, and television.

Last fall Mr. Funt, who operates on the premise that most people will do anything to avoid trouble, again proved himself a privacy buster of no mean stature when he mowed down the sensibilities of both the "guests" on his films and the home audience with one swipe. Through the leering eye of Mr. Funt's camera, the audience is misled into believing that normal reactions are idiotic. Parents cooing over newborn babies, men looking down the low-cut dress of a buxom model, truck drivers reacting unfavorably when their coffee has been heavily flavored with salt, hotel patrons doing double takes when Dorothy Collins lights a cigar, and Danish cyclists ogling a pretty model on a street corner are all chuckled at obscenely. Mr. Funt has taken to using professionals (viz., Yogi Berra, Martha Raye, Dorothy Collins, Audrey Meadows, Phil Silvers) as shells in order to get "name value" for the program listings.

Mr. Godfrey, who once raised the stature of daytime television by conducting a series of provocative conversations, is sadly enough little more than a hustler for peep shows on this job.

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At the end of the program, the nonprofessionals come on, are patronizingly congratulated and pawed by the professionals and sent off with comments such as, "He's a wonderful guy," ringing in their ears and a check for a wholesomely modest sum in their pockets.

Whereas Mr. Godfrey's gleeful chuckle envelops the viewers for "Candid Camera," "This Is Your Life" relies on the kind of unctuous, pseudo-formal charm generally associated with the second in command at undertaking parlors.

Last fall it was revealed in the newspapers that a woman who had appeared on this show as a "happily married" wife and—hold on—as the "symbol of the great American weapon—motherhood" had not lived with her husband in five years. Consequently, it would appear that some folks are even willing to pretty up their privacy a bit so that it will look nice to the great audience out there in teeveeland.

The viewer will find that Mr. Edwards is truly a master craftsman at putting a life together with sticky pieces of tape. He usually manages to foul the cord on his roving mike a time or two to put everyone at ease. The subject's life is narrated in the historical present to provide drama, and the narration is sprinkled throughout with such heart-warming phrases as, "There's enough love here to fill any heart, even one as great as yours, Joe Louis," or "Your children are in school in London. We can't interrupt education and we know you wouldn't want it to be any other way."

Occasionally, the show gets an added dollop of human interest when a friend or relative of a subject appears and is unable to read from the prompt cards.

About two years ago the word was spread that Lowell Thomas had been less than civil when Mr. Edwards began to turn the pages of his life. I watched a rerun of the program on the basis of this rumor but found Mr. Thomas only a little less docile than other "lifers." Heaven only knows where *that* rumor came from. Dignity and privacy, come back! We need you.

H.B.M.

IN PRINT

Best Catholic Articles

Harvest 1960: a Selection of the Best Articles from the Catholic Press Published During the Past Year edited by DAN HERR and PAUL CUNEO. Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1960. 289 pages, \$3.50.

The electioneering for the 1960 presidential campaign revealed how little some Americans have learned since 1928 about extending toleration to Catholics running for high political office. The sheer hysteria of underground anti-Catholicism among groups as diverse as "liberal" northern professors and Bible Belt southern fundamentalists make it desirable to have the cold water of logic thrown in the face of prejudice by contact with a growing minority of Catholic intellectuals. This collection is a good first douse. True, there are traces of the old corn-ball Catholicism in pieces like "Ach Himmel, What a Hymnal!" a glimpse of what might happen if Lawrence Welk became musical adviser to John XXIII. But there are brilliant and sound pieces prophetic of the future of this dimension of minority journalism in America (several Catholic publications near the million mark in circulation).

The best essays are Christopher Dawson's explanation of why there have up to now been so few Catholic intellectuals, Joel Wells's description of how he overcame race prejudice, and politics, John Sisk's piece on prefabricated masculinity in the mass media, and John Cogley's memorable essay on "The Catholic and the Liberal Society." Rather than revive Maria Monk, those fearful of Catholic partisanship ought to see what the most intelligent Catholics are thinking, a task made relatively simple by this collection.

P.D.H.

TV Writers Talk

The Relation of the Writer to Television: a Discussion by Robert Alan Aurthur, Rod Serling, Irve Tunick, and Others. Santa Barbara, Calif.: Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1960. 31 pages, single copies free.

In her introduction to this booklet, critic Marya Mannes states flatly that "the only way in which a writer can use the marvelous medium of television to its full extent is in a system where, as in England, sponsor and program are completely divorced, or in some

form of pay TV." One wonders if happy marriages might not produce the same artistic result here as complete divorces. In fact, the evidence produced by the writers who took part in this discussion indicates that the Bad Guys—the Philistines who are constantly monkeying with the art of TV drama—are apt to be representatives of advertising agencies, not of sponsoring firms.

The edited transcript of this all-day discussion session—involving creative writers connected with television and staff members of the Fund for the Republic's Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, explores in greater depth some of the gripes vented earlier by six TV dramatists on David Susskind's "Open End" program. Like most television playwrights, this group seems to assume that the ideal director is primarily a blocking back who keeps obstacles from coming into contact with the real artist—the writer—but they do show how a TV play grows from an idea into an action and the malformations that might be forced on it along the way. The English teacher who is concerned with literature in a democracy and the conflict between the writer's freedom and the agency men's fear of boycott and economic reprisal will find this handsomely printed pamphlet enlightening and useful.

Single copies may be obtained free by writing: Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Box 4068, Santa Barbara, California.

H.B.M.

Bargain Books

The Enemy Within by ROBERT F. KENNEDY. New York: Popular Library, Inc., 1960. 320 pages, 50 cents.

The economics of textbook publishing and the collaborative reticence of school book selection committees usually result in an image of American history and politics that is unsafely far removed from the harshness and grossness of reality. Especially is this true about the related evils of labor corruption and business chicanery. The unusually fast paperback publication of the counsel for the McClellan Committee suggests an effective way for social studies and P.A.D. teachers to bring a maximum dose of truth to their consideration of our structure of power in America. "The sordid dishonesty uncovered by the McClellan Committee is a reflection on all Americans, for it cuts across all segments of our economic life—labor, management, the law, the press," writes thirty-five-year-old Kennedy.

It is the implication, of course, of what Kennedy aptly dubs "the respectables" in the evils of labor corruption that makes consideration of their mockery of democracy mandatory. "The tyrant, the bully, the corrupter and corrupted are figures of shame. The labor leaders who became thieves, who cheated those whose trust they had accepted, brought dishonor on a vital and largely honest labor movement. The businessmen who succumbed to the temptation to make a deal in order to gain an advantage over their competitors perverted the moral concepts of a free American economic system."

This truly sobering book about the remarkably undemocratic underside of our productive system can help thoughtful teachers keep their curriculums from becoming genteelly irrelevant.

P.D.H.

The Cool World, by WARREN MILLER. New York: Crest Books, 160 pages, 35 cents.

The limited and terror-ridden world of the Negro slum child in Harlem is the subject matter of this remarkable novel. Although sometimes the insights of Duke Custis, President of the Crocodiles, seem too mature, as if the author has translated his own view of the cool world into the hip talk of the hood "with heart," the style is a largely successful embodiment of the limited but intense "vision" of the gang member in the equally limited but surely as intense patois of the street. The novel might well become assigned reading for teachers in tough areas in particular, students of culture conflict in general.

Take, for example, the implications of this passage on a "field trip" to the George Washington Museum for our tame, upper-middle-class versions of American history: "Mister Shapiro he lead us around explainin this an that. Histry make Mister Shapiro get all hopped up you know. He say, 'Think of it boys where you standen now maybe the Father of our Country once stood.' Everybody look down at they feet."

"Handy and Summer an me was in the back an all they talken about was the piece [a gun they want to buy]. Handy say, 'Shitman you get yourself a piece you gonna be President of the Crocodiles. Aint no doubt about that. . . .'"

"Mister Shapiro he calls us over. . . . Then he say, 'Just think boys. This is the place where George Washington tooken the Oath of Office an become our first president.'

"'Now whut do you think of that.' Someone say.

"Mister Shapiro dont pay no attention to him. He say, 'Do you never think boys that they

was a time this nation of ours was just *one day old*?"

"'Jus a goddam baby.' Same person say. George Cadmus. Mister Shapiro know but he dont pay any attention. He talken about how rough things was in the old days. Man it was rough at Valley Forge an places like that he tellin us."

The irony of our curriculum's teaching patriotism to children of the urban jungles with pious little homilies about how rough it was for the Revolutionary generation is this interesting book's fresh perspectives on a number of issues at which the official American rhetoric and the real American failures diverge.

P.D.H.

From the Critics' Notebook

ON THE DECLINE AND FALL OF NEARLY EVERYTHING (John Crosby in the Philadelphia Sunday Bulletin for August 28, 1960): "TIME magazine had a very cute and astringent article in its book section recently about what it calls non-books, written by non-authors for non-people. This little burst of indignation is long overdue.

"While becoming increasingly restive about the debauchery of taste in the television dodge, I cannot help but be aware that television is not alone in the field of being lousy. For sheer incompetence, the publishing business has been matching television stride for stride for a good many years.

"Year-in year-out, the best seller list is as fine a collection of utter tripe as can be found on television. We have some very bad writing on TV. But certainly nothing any worse than that in 'Advise and Consent.'

"That book has been at the head or near the head of the best seller list for months and it reads like a bad first draft of a bad first novel. . . .

"TIME'S piece is not directed at slipshod novels like 'Advise and Consent' so much as at the real non-books such as those by Art Linkletter, which have hardly any business existing between hard covers. . . .

"The books that have moved into the drug-store are merchandised exactly like toothpaste—the advertising having no relation whatsoever with the contents. This is an immoral way to sell even toothpaste, but the felony is compounded when books are sold that way. For the first has to do with a substance that is put into the mouth only temporarily; the second has to do with what goes into the mind. . . ."

AUDIO-VISUAL NEWS

Midwest Program on Air-borne Television Instruction

The Midwest Program on Air-borne Television Instruction represents a promising opportunity to harness television to bring the highest quality of education to millions of youngsters, in large and small communities alike, more quickly and at less cost than by any other means available. Like movable type and the printed page, however, television is simply a medium of communication. Its utility to education will depend primarily on how wisely it is used, on the quality of what is communicated, and how television instruction is integrated with other learning experiences in the school.

In the 1958-59 school year, 569 public school systems and 117 colleges and universities in America used television for direct instruction in regular courses involving more than 500,000 school children and 100,000 college students. It has now been demonstrated that television is an effective means for giving far more students access to unusually talented teachers, and for giving students rich learning experiences, such as scientific demonstrations, that cannot possibly be provided in ordinary classrooms.

Educational television stations and closed-circuit TV systems in schools have laid the basis, educationally and technically, for the great stride forward made possible by an air-borne system.

By elevating the ETV station a few miles above the earth, its geographic coverage is greatly expanded, enabling it to reach a large majority of school children beyond the telecasting limits of ground-based ETV stations, particularly in small towns and rural areas where educational help is needed most.

On the ground or in the air, however, a single open-circuit channel faces difficulties in attempting to serve a significant portion of the whole curriculum or grade spectrum. A typical twelve-grade school system offers anywhere from 100 to 175 separate courses, some divided into differentiated sections according to student ability. A single television channel can provide only twelve half-hour units of instruction in a six-hour school day, enough for only one-half hour per day at each grade level. The disparity between broadcasting potential and size of curriculum is even greater at the college level.

A ground-based, closed-circuit system with six simultaneous channels can overcome this limitation, but the cost is prohibitive when the students to be served are in classrooms which are widely dispersed geographically. Again, this difficulty is overcome when the multichannel system—starting with two channels and containing the potential for six—becomes air borne.

Recent engineering studies, drawing upon the technical findings of the Westinghouse Stratovision experiments, have laid the basis for the Midwest Program to telecast over two channels, and the eventual possibility of as many as six simultaneously from one aircraft. Such a system will enable the telecasting of courses by an outstanding faculty to schools and colleges over most of the territory within a radius of 150-200 miles. A second stand-by aircraft will assure high reliability of operation regardless of weather conditions and equipment breakdown.

Thus will be made available, at relatively low cost per pupil a top-quality faculty and a broad and rich curriculum to a vast number of students both in small rural schools and in large urban schools. Telecasts will cover an area in part of six states: Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The broadcast schedule will begin initially with the telecasting of instructional programs over two channels. If this pilot operation proves successful, it would then be possible to expand the service to six simultaneous programs.

Eventually, an air-borne TV system transmitting six simultaneous programs could provide seventy-two separate half-hour units during a six-hour school day. This makes it possible to provide high-quality televised programs covering a considerable portion of the entire curriculum of a school system, even allowing some repetition of programs at different hours to provide greater flexibility of scheduling for individual schools.

If the air-borne experiment proves successful, it may serve as a pilot project for similar regional undertakings in other sections of the country. It has been envisioned that eventually a relatively small number of aircraft could provide coast-to-coast educational television coverage.

During the development stage of the program, 1960-62, MPATI will service the participating schools in two phases: (1) February-May,

1961, will be a period of "demonstration" telecasts, permitting schools to observe the program, to check the quality of signals received, and to take steps toward installing and testing their classroom equipment. It is planned that during this period the aircraft will transmit on two VHF channels simultaneously, four hours a day and four days a week. (2) September, 1961-May, 1962, will constitute the first full academic year of air-borne telecast instruction. During this period, present plans call for the aircraft to transmit six hours a day, four days a week. Courses will vary in length from typically fifteen to twenty minutes at the elementary and secondary levels, to thirty minutes at the college level. During both phases of telecasting—but particularly the demonstration period—interested schools will be provided with assistance and guidance on both the technical and educational aspects of the program.

An intensive teacher talent search was conducted by MPATI to find not only the outstanding teachers throughout the six-state area, but from classrooms throughout the United States. Kinescoped auditions of nearly 300 teacher candidates were forwarded to the viewing rooms at Purdue University, where a TV-teacher preliminary screening panel of local and regional experts in education and educational TV convened to sift out some fifty of the best. These selections constituted the main pool from which a final choice of TV teachers was made by other panels composed of eminent scholars, educational TV consultants, and other experts in relevant fields.

The selected TV teachers gathered at workshops at Purdue University during the summer of 1960 to prepare the courses for air-borne TV. This activity included production of course outlines, research, design, and construction of graphic materials and consultation with TV production personnel, with outstanding academic authorities in particular subject areas, and with curriculum specialists from the six-state region to be sure each course falls within the prescribed "course of study" specifications by the several states. On completion of course preparation, the TV teachers went to production centers, such as local ETV stations, for the actual recording work.

To help participating schools make the maximum use of the telecast courses, they will be provided with a log of courses offered and will be able to purchase needed supplemental texts, syllabuses, and other written aids prepared with the assistance of MPATI's educational materials division. In addition, a manual prepared by

prominent educators will be available to teachers and administrators advising them on how to use instructional television effectively in the classroom.

Two DC6AB aircraft—one to serve as a stand-by—will be used for transmitting study courses to the schools. Based at Purdue University Airport, West Lafayette, Indiana, each plane will be equipped with two TV transmitters, permitting telecasting of two courses of instruction simultaneously. In operation during the school day, the transmitting aircraft will orbit in a circle of ten miles' radius at an assigned altitude of 23,000 feet over north central Indiana, with the community of Montpelier as the approximate center. Air-to-ground transmission will be on standard-band, ultra-high-frequency channels. Over-all responsibility for engineering the air-borne telecasting system is being carried by Westinghouse Electric Corporation, and responsibility for the narrow-band aspects of the program by CBS Laboratories, Inc.

In addition to school systems which will be receiving the courses directly, local educational television stations in major cities in the area will be encouraged to pick them up for retelecasting to fringe areas of reception or video tape them for telecasting at hours different from the air-borne telecast schedule.

Colleges and universities will serve as resource institutions within the six-state telecasting region for schools and school personnel interested in participating in the program. In-service workshops were conducted this past summer for classroom teachers, principals, and superintendents. They will be repeated during the summer of 1961.

Total project costs of \$7,000,000 are being met by a \$4,500,000 appropriation from the Ford Foundation and contributions from private industry. Participating schools will equip themselves at their own expense.

The following information is designed to give schools an idea of the kinds of equipment needed and approximate costs. Costs will vary according to the quality and complexity of the equipment required. The most variable factor, however, is the antenna system; as a general rule, the farther away the school from the center of the telecasting circle, the more expensive is the antenna required.

Careful consideration should be given to the quality of the receiving system because the effectiveness of TV instruction is strongly affected by the clarity and reliability of both the sound and picture received in the classroom. A little additional money spent on better

quality equipment at the outset can pay significant educational and financial dividends.

The viewing area has been divided into Zones A, B, and C, representing distances from the air-borne transmitters of 0 to 50 miles, 50 to 100 miles, and 100 to 150 miles, respectively. With proper equipment a satisfactory signal may be expected at most locations in all three zones. Beyond Zone C the probabilities of good reception decline.

Schools may select one of two installations: (1) a system of master antenna with central UHF converter, amplifier, and distribution lines linked to a series of VHF classroom receivers; or (2) individual antennas connected directly into UHF/VHF receivers. (Technically it is not feasible to distribute a UHF signal from a single antenna to more than one receiver.) The latter installation, although more economical when a small number of receivers is installed, has certain disadvantages: The appearance of individual antennas on the roof of a school building may be unattractive, particularly as the number of receivers increases. Also, there is no control point to assure consistently good reception on all sets. Perhaps most important of all, while the system installation can serve as a nucleus for a closed-circuit system within the school at a later time, the individual antenna installation would not be easily adaptable to this purpose.

Sample equipment costs are: (a) TV receiver installation, \$50-\$1,000; (c) head end including installation, \$50-\$1,000; (c) Head end including installation (system only), UHF converter, \$600; amplifiers, \$300-\$500; distribution (wiring to rooms, per room), \$50.

Equipment manufacturers and their local dealers are prepared to offer a variety of arrangements for financing on a short- or long-term basis. A rental arrangement might also be considered. Service contracts or similar agreements might also be desirable for maintenance of the receiving systems. The administrative staff consists of President, John E. Ivey, Jr.; Vice-president, Bryghte D. Godbold; General Assistant to the Vice-president, Lyndell N. Welbourne; Director of Public Information, John H. Worthington.

Most of the foregoing information was obtained from the booklet, "Midwest Program on Air-borne Television Instruction."

For further information, write to the main office: Memorial Center, Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind.; or to 680 Fifth Ave., New York 19, N.Y., or 228 North LaSalle St., Chicago 1, Ill.

Rear Projection Devices

Seen at NAVA Trade Show

Friddell Bi-Fi Console, \$319.50; with equipment, \$1,895; Friddell Manufacturing Co., Galveston, Texas. A rear-view projection unit, available with or without equipment, it includes as basic console a 36-inch TV screen, Hi Fi sound with two 8-inch speakers and 25-watt amplifier. It is designed to accommodate and may be ordered complete with 16-mm. sound projector, record player, tape recorder, slide and filmstrip projector, and microphone. Overall size is 60 inches high, 25½ inches deep, 32¾ inches wide. Name brands available are Bell and Howell, Eastman, Victor Kalart, and Viking.

Audio-Viewer (no price given), Sarasota Audio Visual Corp., P.O. Box 3637 Sarasota, Fla. This projection screen accepts most models of the Bell and Howell movie projector. It comes with a 40-inch TV screen, wide-angle 13-mm. f:1.5 lens and 6-inch by 9-inch oval speaker and, coaxially mounted tweeter. The unit dimensions are 27 inches by 58 inches by 67½ inches high.

New Releases

OUTLAW COUNTRY: film, 13½ mins., color, \$120, ACI Productions, 56 West 45th St., New York 36, N.Y. This film is a plunge into the seldom seen hinterlands of southern Utah and northern Arizona. A visit is made to a little known tribe of Indians hidden in a side canyon of the Grand Canyon. Photography by Jack Breed.

HOPI KACHINAS: film, 10 mins., color, \$100, ACI Productions, 56 West 45th St., New York 36, N.Y. This film's accurate explanation of the commonly seen but seldom understood Kachina dolls provides the key to the true meaning of the entire Hopi culture. The carving and painting of the dolls are demonstrated, and the religious meaning of the dolls culminates in one of the most important but rarely photographed rituals of that region—an actual Hopi butterfly dance.

SWITZERLAND OF AMERICA: film, 11½ mins., color, \$120, ACI Productions, 56 West 45th St., New York 36, N.Y. A fast-moving but incisive look at one part of our country—remote from most of us but telling something about all of us. Southwest Colorado provides the kind of contrast that typifies America.

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